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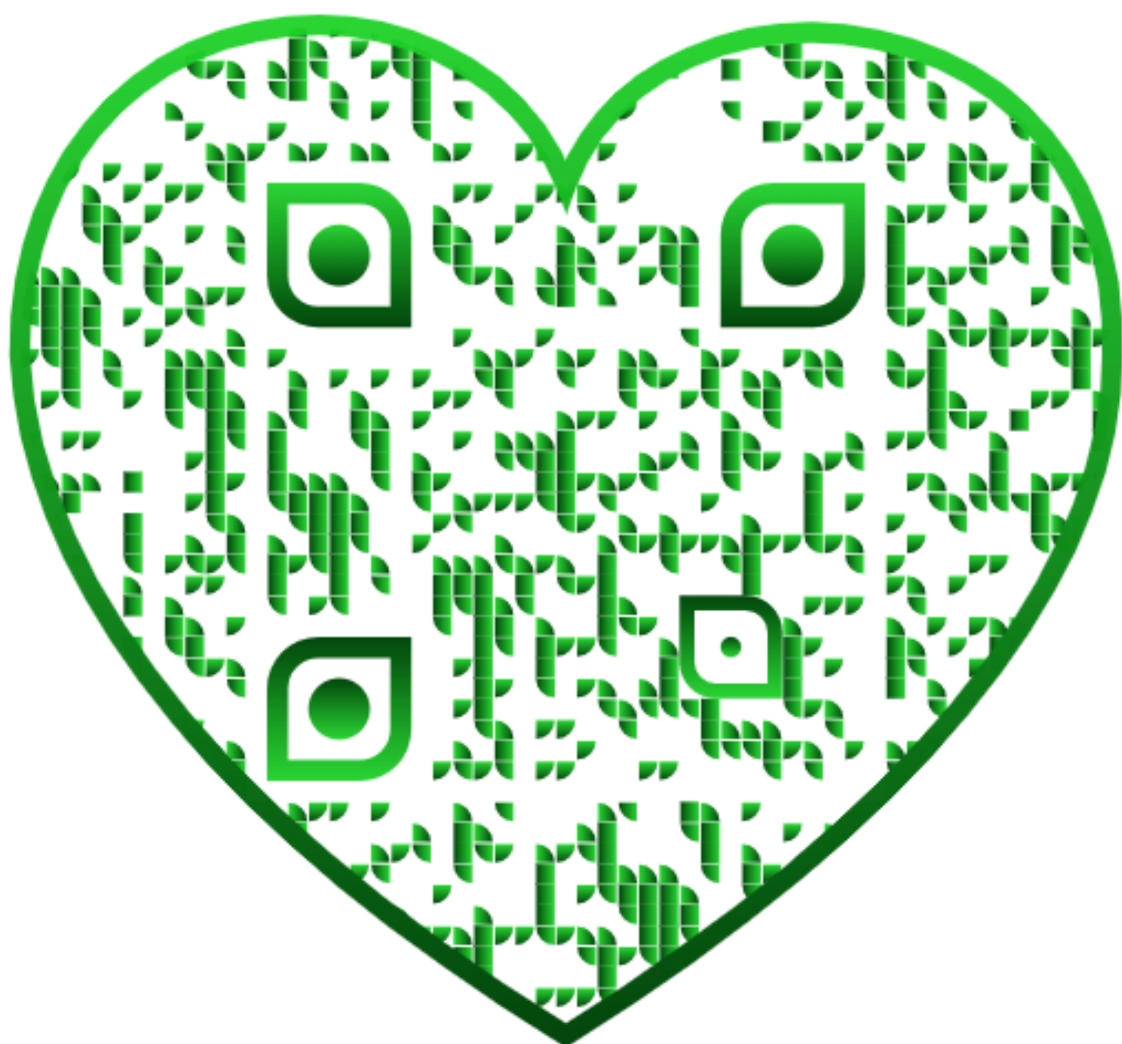


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THE BIG PICTURE

Peter Brock powers to the first of his record nine Bathurst enduro wins, on 1 October 1972, the last before the distance was upped from 500 miles to 1000km for '73. Damp conditions at Mount Panorama Circuit in New South Wales led to polesitter Allan Moffat spinning his Ford Falcon, while Brock stormed through from fifth in his Holden Dealer Team-prepared LJ Torana GTR XU-1, one of the few icons from the Ford vs Holden wars not to feature in Robert Rampton's remarkable collection (p122). AC





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Welcome

I've just been doing a bit of a deep dive into the classified adverts and have had a minor epiphany. Did you know that you can get a Lotus Esprit Turbo for a little over £20k? And I'm not talking about a project car, either: it won't be perfect at that level, and you'll be largely restricted to the early

X180 models, but there are some good, usable cars out there for very sensible money if you're willing to hunt around. Spend a little more – but still less than half of what a nice Ferrari 308GTB would set you back – and your choice opens up to include the Giugiaro cars and some desirable later models such as the S4.

'Twas ever thus for the Esprit. Even when it was new this was a giant-killer, offering performance and chassis dynamics to match – or sometimes even better – the very best the rest of the world had to offer, but undercutting them on price. Even now, when the name is a genuine icon of the supercar genre, it struggles to shake off the stigma born of plastic panelwork and a mere four cylinders (note that you're unlikely to get any change from £50k if you're shopping for the more exotic V8 version). Frankly, that's good news as far as I'm concerned, because it means that the fantasy of owning a supercar remains tantalisingly within reach for those of more modest means – such as motoring journalists, for example.

So the Lotus middie is something truly rare and refreshing in the madness of the modern-classic marketplace: a *bona fide* bargain. Just don't tell anyone, or it might not last...

ALASTAIR CLEMENTS

Editor in chief, *Classic & Sports Car*

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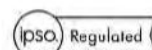
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'On the Hethel track the Esprit is as sprightly as its name implies, responding with precision and fine balance at every turn'

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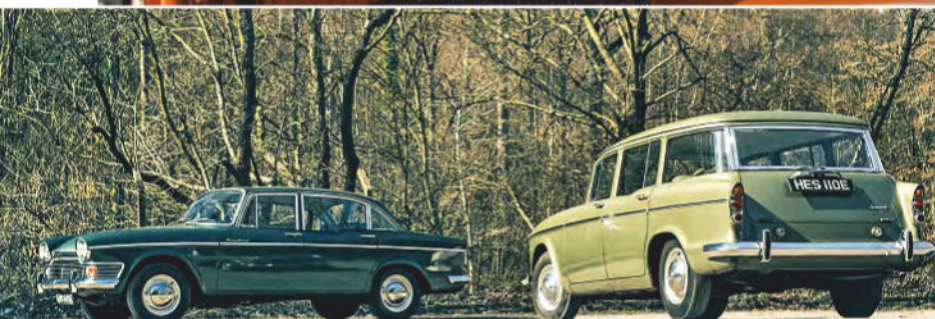


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1934 Alfa Romeo P3 took the Best of Show crown at Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este



Remarkable OSI 'Silver Fox' prototype was built as an experiment in aerodynamics; Serenissima 308V is parked alongside



From above: Citroën DS Le Caddy and Ferrari 410 Superamerica; Pinin Farina Bentley MkVI Cresta notchback

P3 TAKES COMO'S GRAND PRIX

Classic Alfa Romeo is Best of Show, but outstanding exotics of all eras were in abundance at Villa d'Este

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY AARON MCKAY

Ex-René Dreyfus and
Charlie Martin 1933
Bugatti T59 won a
Mention of Honour



Ferrari racers included sole
Scaglietti-bodied 250 Monza
and 375MM originally owned
by privateer Piero Scotti



After being spoilt for choice with Scuderia Ferrari racers, it was a 1934 Alfa Romeo P3 campaigned by Enzo's equipe that judges ultimately crowned Best of Show at this year's Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este, on the shores of Lake Como, Italy, from 23-25 May.

Chassis 50003 was one of nine from the third batch of P3s built, one of the many wearing the Prancing Horse marking what had then become Alfa Romeo's official works team. Designed by Vittorio Jano, these 2.9-litre *monopostos* stormed to multiple Grand Prix victories with the likes of Tazio Nuvolari, Achille Varzi, Guy Moll and Louis Chiron. History fails to record which car took which win, but 50003 has been remarkably well documented since, from its sale in '36 to the talented amateur racer Charles Martin, who placed the Alfa second at Pau, Deauville and Donington that year.

Post-WW2 it went to Australia, where it continued racing and was restored, before landing back in the UK, where owner David Black restored it once more, including fitting a 3.2-litre engine, after which it became known as 'The ERA beater' on the vintage racing scene. More recently it joined the

German Vesta Auriga Collection and was brought back to concours standards by Ben Collings. Interestingly, the 1933 Bugatti T59 that Charles Martin replaced with 50003 was also present, taking Mention of Honour in the class.

On the basis of popular reaction, the 1938 Alfa Romeo 8C-2900MM Spider Corsa owned by Ralph Lauren might well have been considered this year's Villa d'Este favourite, but this Touring-bodied car, described by judge Gabriele von Oppenheim as "a journey back in time", instead settled for the Trofeo dei Presidenti dei Concorsi Internazionali. In the 1938 Mille Miglia it fell to second with brake trouble from an assured lead, but its curious life continued in the USA under TV magnate Tommy Lee from the late 1940s and later with Phil Hill, who used it in the Del Monte Cup at the 1951 Pebble Beach Road Races. Lauren bought the car in 2004, before Paul Russell was commissioned to restore it.

After driving on to the judges' podium through an appreciative crowd, Ralph's son Andrew said: "It has been a family passion for a long time. For my father, there is something synonymous with cars and fashion."



Clockwise from left: Bizzarrini's own 1900GT; Alfa 6C-2500 T256 and Lagonda V12 at Villa Erba; Arthur Lauren passengers father Ralph's Alfa Romeo 8C-2900MM

A set of five competition Ferrari sports cars in the Titans of the Track category entranced racing fans, as everyone near the parade pondered donning ear defenders. Amongst the *furor*, the 1954 250 Monza emerged as class winner, adding to its recent Best of Show victory at the Cavallino Classic Modena (*News*, July). The sole Scaglietti-bodied car of its type and now restored to its Carrera Panamericana livery, the Monza was accompanied by a 1953 375MM, 1959 196S Fantuzzi and 1967 Dino 206S. A 1954 121LM took Mention of Honour, confirming a Ferrari lockout above two Aston Martin DB3s and the ex-Tommy Atkins 1963 Jaguar E-type Lightweight – although that car did win Best Preserved Interior.

Outstanding examples of fine coachwork were in extravagant supply as ever, most dramatically illustrated by the 1948 Paris Salon star and winner of its class here, a Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport. Its distinctly low roofline and short, 2650mm wheelbase were emboldened by its restored, mint-over-chocolate colour scheme, the result of a five-year project led by owner Robert Kudela and his father. Joining it in the category entitled Vanishing Act, other lost marques were represented by fascinating oddities from the likes of Siata, Pegaso and Iso.

Another highlight was the 1965 Serenissima 308V. One of just two



From top: E36 M3 GTs mark 50 years of the 3 Series; spectacular display of BMW's 1940 Mille Miglia sports-racers

Spiders bodied by Fantuzzi, this sole survivor recently came out of long-term storage with marque founder Count Giovanni Volpi.

The most extraordinary in the class, however, was the incredible OSI prototype built for the 1967 Turin show. Conceived by Grand Prix driver Piero Taruffi, this experimental aerodynamic machine, nicknamed the 'Silver Fox', bridged an unimaginable gap between the forms of a car, a motorcycle with sidecar and a catamaran. Its owner, Paul-Emile Bessade, has just finished the mechanical restoration of its Renault-Alpine 1-litre 'four', which is mounted in the left pontoon, opposite the driver, and has since

tested it on the track. "It's actually quite easy to drive," he beamed.

It was a rare treat to find a 1957 Dual-Ghia D500, '67 Citroën DS21 Le Caddy convertible by Chapron and a Pininfarina-bodied 1949 Bentley MkVI coupé grouped together in the mid-century Style Matters class, overlooked by the Siata 208CS, Ferrari 212 Export Cabriolet and Bugatti Type 101C Antem from the Renaissance group for post-war sports cars.

In the former, judges were won over by the inspiring story of the 1959 Ferrari 410 Superamerica's first owner taking his 100-mile-fresh car to Bonneville Salt Flats for a 157mph run, as well as its recent, impeccable restoration by Paul Russell, which included reverse-engineering the rear axle. It was an even rarer Ferrari model, the Vignale-bodied 212, that took top honours in the latter class; having entered into UK ownership in '61, it still had a period Clayton heater mounted beneath the dash.

Preservation remained a hot topic in 2025, following last year's headline win from that category, with a strong showing ultimately won by an 18,500-mile 1967 Ferrari 330GTC delivered new to Los Angeles. Students of rare exotica may have been more stirred by the appearance of not only the legendary Monteverdi 450S Hai, but also the '67 Bizzarrini Europa 1900GT. The latter was junior to the mighty 5300GT and fitted with

glassfibre bodywork tested in the Università di Pisa windtunnel, a four-cylinder engine from the Opel GT and exotic suspension with Campagnolo magnesium uprights. Only an estimated 12-17 examples were built, with this particular car used by the firm's founder for more than 10 years and 55,000km; its current owner has added another 20,000km.

An even more dramatic study of aerodynamics was served up by the 1937 BMW 328 Fachsenfeld Stromlinien-Coupé, one of two 123mph cars with a 0.28 drag coefficient produced by engineers Paul Jaray, Reinhard von Koenig-Fachsenfeld and Wunibald Kamm. "It's still quick enough to pass people on the *autobahn*," enthused current owner Bernard Knoechlein. "Most have no idea how it happened!" The second example survives in the Deutsches Museum in Munich.

A 1933 Duesenberg SJ took overall honours – naturally – in the Glorious Excess class aimed at 1920s-'40s cars. This was one of three examples built as a Sweep Panel Dual Cowl Phaeton on a 3890mm wheelbase, then sold to a Wall Street pioneer of short-selling, who later drove it to Mexico for a business deal. The SJ became part of the agreement and remained, becoming known as the Mexico City Car.

Honoured alongside it was the sole-surviving fabric-bodied Duesenberg Model J; Weymann coachwork fans were also treated to a 1927 Rolls-Royce 20hp saloon built by HJ Mulliner to Weymann

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Ferrari F50 and Merc CLK-GTR Roadster celebrated more modern excesses

specification in the Preservation set. Glorious Excess continued with a 1934 Packard 1108 Convertible Sedan by Dietrich, first owned by a gold-mine heiress and priced at \$6555 when new; a magnificent 1938 Lancia Astura with an electric convertible roof; a 1939 Lagonda V12 Rapide bought with the Kleenex fortune; and a sensational 1939 Alfa Romeo 6C-2500SS Tipo 256, a rare road car with Alfa Corse-tweaked engine beneath its Touring bodywork.

At the other end of the age scale, it was touching to have Lorenzo Ramaciotti on hand to comment on the Ferrari F50. "When we were designing it, we never expected this car to be in a concours," said the ex-Pininfarina man, "but it's special to see it here, all this time later, part of a new generation."

The class winner in the 1980s to millennium Go Big or Go Home group was a 1993 Bugatti EB110 in Verde Scuro Metallizzato, shown beside one of seven Mercedes-Benz CLK-GTR Roadsters, one of three roadgoing Maserati MC12 GT1s, a McLaren F1 GTR and a Ferrari F40 GTE.

The Villa d'Este troupe migrated to Villa Erba on Sunday, displacing a set of modern classics that had on Saturday included a tribute to 50 years of the BMW 3 Series. Stars included early E21s, an E30 325ix and a multi-coloured E36 Compact California, plus five limited-run E36 M3 GTs. An exhibition from sponsor BMW brought together five 328s to represent the marque's 1940 Mille Miglia win, including the Mille Miglia Roadster and superbly recreated Kamm Coupé.



From left: 1951 Alfa GP Tipo 159; 1930 Alfa P2 with TZs and twin-cam-powered racing boat

ITALIAN STARS ENJOYED WITHOUT JUDGEMENT

At the nearby Villa del Grumello and Villa Sucota, the FuoriConcorso enjoyed much greater popularity than last year. Some impressive machinery was assembled under its Velocissimo theme, dedicated to Italian motoring, while still eschewing the traditional concours structure or any judging.

Its avenue of Formula One cars included a 1951 Alfa Romeo Tipo 159, a 1988 Dallara F188, a '91 Lamborghini 291 and an ex-Michael Schumacher 2006 Ferrari F248. Lancia rally cars were celebrated with the 1977 Rallye Monte-Carlo-winning HF Stratos, a Delta S4 and the 1983 Eminence Volta 037 that took third in that year's Tour de France.

The 'Uovo' 166MM Ferrari (C&SC, January) appeared alongside the 1964 250GTO that Phil Hill and Olivier Gendebien drove to second in

the 12 Hours of Sebring that year, as well as the one-off 1958 Maserati 420M/58 Eldorado built for the 500 Miles of Monza. A 1970 Abarth 2000 SE010 of prolific hillclimber Edoardo Lualdi Gabardi also featured.

Alfa Romeos were out in force, with a Zagato-bodied 1930 6C-1750 Gran Sport leading a set of racers: from the '60s a Giulia TZ and TZ2, and from the '70s a Tipo 33/3 and 33-12. Contrasting the 6C and a 1933 short-chassis 8C Touring Spider was the ex-Michael Bartels 1995 DTM 155, recently restored in its bright-orange Jägermeister livery.

Other rarities were sprinkled throughout the grounds of the two estates, including a 1947 Cisitalia D47, 1949 Dagrada-Giannini 750 Sport, three Koenigseggs and three Mercedes-Benz Le Mans cars: a C11, CLK-GTR and CLK-LM.



Clockwise from main: head-turning Ferrari 166MM 'Uovo'; 1970 Abarth 2000 SE010; Maserati 420M/58 Eldorado one-off

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There was no resting on laurels at the 12th edition of the Madeira Classic Car Revival from 23-25 May. The already fantastic event that takes over the Portuguese outpost continues to add new features and, despite the island's isolation, display fresh rarities.

No one can dispute Madeira's passion for classic cars, with more than 2000 historic vehicles registered on the island against a population of just 250,000. Roughly a quarter of them – 564 cars, vans and motorbikes – took over the seafront of capital city Funchal for two and a half days.

A further three vehicles made the 600-mile journey from the Portuguese mainland to join the event. That included a Bugatti Type 57 Stelvio by Gangloff (C&SC, November 2020) and a licensed Benz Patent-Motorwagen replica from the Museu do Caramulo, as well as Pedro Filipe's one-off 1954 OLDA racer (see panel). For all three it was their first time at the event, though the Bugatti did have a history of previously visiting the far-flung isle.

More impressive for visitors, however – admitted to the event completely free of charge – was that these classics, among many others, took part in demonstration laps along a closed section of Madeira's seaside avenue for the very first time at the Revival. Even



Lovely Ford V8 Roadster was awarded Best of Show

CLASSIC ISLE OF PLENTY



Barn-find Corolla looks ripe for restoration. Left: Bugatti Type 57 Stelvio was visiting from mainland Portugal



better, most cars were also able to take passengers along for the ride, with everything from MG TCs to Porsche 911s slaloming through the hay bales on the seafront throughout the day.

It's the island's isolation from the mainland that has created its unique car culture. There's no car ferry to Madeira, so vehicles are kept going here longer even than in Portugal, which is itself known for preserving classics well. It also means that cars don't leave when they do get tired out. Fresh models to Madeira's car scene are often rusting hulks pulled out of a family member's garden, restored by the island's substantial heritage industry. The barn-find E20 Toyota Corolla coupé on display at the Revival proved that there are still gems being unearthed.

The Corolla was part of a superb selection of 1970s and early '80s Japanese cars, a truly remarkable gathering at a European event. These brands, in particular Toyota and Datsun, found a firm foothold in Portugal earlier than elsewhere in Europe, with the lack of home marques fostering a more open market as long as jobs for locals were provided. Toyota's Ovar plant near Porto was its first in Europe, and still produces cars to this day.

There were nine E20 Corollas and five Datsun B110 Sunnys, along with early examples of the



Cressida, Starlet and Bluebird, all now rarer sights than the majority of Ferrari or Lamborghini models.

Madeira's other great love is Fiat, and it was the most numerous marque at the event, with 50 cars. That included 16 600s gathered for the model's 70th anniversary – among them a handful of Neckar Jagsts, built in Germany – as well as rare models such as a 125, 124 Sport Coupé and even an Abarth Scorpion SS. Classic Peugeots, VWs, Minis and Fords took up large areas of the show, too.

Saturday's festivities culminated in an awards ceremony, with the Best of Show trophy going to Gil Canha's 1934 Ford V8 Roadster. Miguel Freitas' E30 BMW M3 won the Preservation Award, while the Madeiran government's own 1928 Hudson Super Six – part of a fleet of vehicles owned and displayed by the local authority – won the Elegance Award.



FRANCISCO CORREIA

On Sunday, meanwhile, many of the cars previously on display took part in the historic Rampa dos Barreiros hillclimb. It's officially a regularity rally, but some drove the 2km course across Funchal's seafront and up into the city centre as quickly as possible while others, such as Alberto Vasconcelos in his 1981 Toyota Starlet, put on a show, drifting around corners and doing doughnuts at the turning points. Victory went to 2024 runners-up Júlia Barros and Patrícia Gouveia, in their Mercedes-Benz 280SL.

Clockwise from above: previous Best of Show winners assembled on the seafront; winning Mercedes R107 SL takes to the hill; rare UMM Turbo; Fiat 600 70th-birthday line-up



RIDING IN A UNIQUE OLDA

Made in Coimbra by a Portuguese commercial-vehicle manufacturer for its proprietor, Joaquim Correia de Oliveira, to go racing, the 1954 OLDA is a one-off sports-racer based on a Fiat chassis and powered by a Borgward engine. Clothed in bespoke aluminium bodywork, the car competed on Porto's Boavista street circuit and across Portugal, as well as Morocco, in its day. The OLDA was brought to the event by Pedro Filipe, who added the car to his collection of Portuguese vehicles earlier this year.

I joined Pedro for the car's demonstration run up and down Funchal's seafront, the last full demo of the event and one of Pedro's first proper drives in the car. The OLDA spluttered into life, needing multiple push-starts and refused to idle – so, rather than risk cutting out in the tight turning area, we took an impromptu drive up Funchal's main street, Rua 31 de Janeiro. *Senhor* de Oliveira was clearly not a tall man, so both Pedro and I struggled to get our legs behind the dash, but the car is sprightly for its size, and easy to control when goaded into a powerslide on a roundabout. **CC**



LE MANS CLASSIC EXPANDS

Peter Auto has announced that the Le Mans Classic is moving to an annual schedule, previously having run every two years. The event will alternate between Le Mans Classic Heritage, focusing on 'golden age' racers, and Le Mans Classic Legend, featuring cars from 1976 to 2015.



NO COMO? NO FOMO

Just weeks after Europe's finest gathered on the shores of Lake Como, Lac de Madine hosted a huge 40th-anniversary *Rétro Meus'Auto* that drew 3000-plus cars on 14-15 June. The casual lakeside event also hosted one of France's largest autojumbles.



VICTORY FOR PEDAL POWER

Eight-year-old Settrington Cup veteran Alyssa Thomas smashed the Goodwood pedal-car lap record on 13 June to raise funds for Mission Motorsport. Alyssa broke the previous best for the 2.367-mile track by nearly 10 mins as she crossed the line in 31 mins 51 secs. Donate at justgiving.com/page/j40-goodwood-lap-record



SOUTHERN NIGHTS

Brooklands hosted the first of its Cool Flo Summer Cruise Nights on 29 May. Welcoming pre-1995 cars for an evening barbecue, the event attracts all sorts, with rat-rod VWs, Cal-look Porsches and hot-rod Fords lining up alongside a Chevy Impala lowrider (above).



Clockwise from main: winning EB110; Walsh presents Turner with Restoration Showcase gong; gorgeous Maserati 3500 landed the Chairman's Award



London Concours salutes Bugatti's supercar revival

The ninth edition of the London Concours paid tribute to all corners of the automotive world from 3-6 June, marking 70 years of the Mercedes-Benz SL and 50 years of the Ferrari V8, plus categories for AC, Ford, restorations, modern classics and even more modern hypercars.

On the lawns of the Honourable Artillery Company in the capital, a 1993 Bugatti EB110 emerged as Best of Show, out of the Dream Cars group. The first built of the later SS models, it was originally delivered to the Brunei royal family. Recently recommissioned with new tyres and

service items, its originality was noted by the judges, down to details such as a faded sunstrip in the rear screen. It edged out runners-up including a 1998 Porsche 911 GT1 and '89 930 turbo S.

The Chairman's Award went to the winner of the Wildcards class, a 1961 Maserati 3500GT that looked somehow out of place beside a 1963 Peel P50, a Lister-Jaguar XJ40 and *The Thomas Crown Affair* Meyers Manx, but otherwise sparkled just as it did for its first owner in Beverly Hills.

Another Maserati was victorious in the new Restoration Showcase, judged by C&SC's Mick Walsh. The 'barn-find' Bora rebuilt by Turner Classic was rewarded for its superb attention to detail, and the story of its post-restoration trip over *The Italian Job* Alpine passes for Ian Turner's daughter's wedding. "It's a fantastic touring car with amazing luggage space," Ian enthused.

In the Mercedes-Benz SL set, a 2012 SLS AMG took the top prize, while a 2019 Ferrari 488 Pista Spider also championed over its ancestors in the V8 category. The Youngtimer group proved popular and attracted some rare machinery, including Alpina-BMWs and AMG Mercedes-Benz models from the 1980s, but taking the crown was a 1989 Porsche 911 turbo SE Flachbau.

Among the intriguing highlights of the other classes was a 1967 AC Acedes, a three-wheeler that supported the firm's sports-car aspirations with 15,000 sales. It was a stark contrast to the sensational 1967 428 Convertible class-winner, likewise a 289 Cobra and Ace 2.6 Ruddspeed.

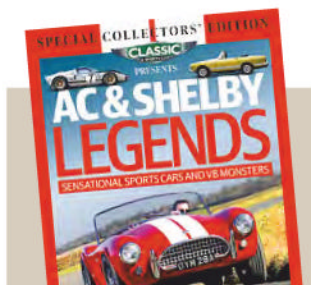
Similarly, a pair of hot Ford Capris – '72 Perana V8 and '80 3.0S X-Pack – and a Mustang GT500 KR were not shy against the judges' favourite Fast Ford, a 1987 RS 200. Further rarities included a gullwing-doored '58 Triumph TR3A Mulsanne Butterfield by Williams & Pritchard, and the outrageous Sotheby Special by Ogle Design. It's one of two of these Aston Martin DBS V8-based curiosities, but the other is rarely seen in public.

C&SC's CHOICE



MERCEDES-BENZ 300Sc

Just 49 300Sc Convertible As were built from 1955-'58, but far fewer have stayed in the same hands from new. Johanna White's late husband went to Stuttgart for this car in '56, and she continues the enthusiasm for its extraordinary quality – while preserving its remarkable originality – today. Already featured in C&SC in June 2000, she was overwhelmed to discover it had caught our attention again. "It's now doubly an honour, I really can't express my delight," she said.



ROAD AND RACE HEROES

The 27th edition in our *Legends* series, *AC & Shelby Legends*, is on sale now, covering AC Cars from its first steps to the mid-engined 3000ME, plus Carroll Shelby and the Cobra, as well as the Texan's other key projects including the GT40 and Tiger. See magsdirect.co.uk/classic-sports-car-presents/



GREENWICH GOES GREEN

A 1972 Lamborghini Miura SV belonging to Lawrence Auriana won Best of Show: Concours de Sport at the Greenwich Concours in Connecticut, USA, on 1 June.

The Best of Show: Concours d'Elegance, meanwhile, went to Tom Maoli's 1932 Duesenberg Model J Murphy convertible.



SUPERMINI CELEBRATION

Enthusiasts gathered at Ciney Expo for Rétromoteur, one of Belgium's biggest classic shows, from 7-9 June. Plenty of clubs took part, but it was local group Typ86.be that stood out with a line of six VW Polos to mark the model's 50th birthday (above).



WHAT'S OCCURRING?

A trio of cars from sitcom *Gavin & Stacey* is now on display at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu. Gavin's Citroën Saxo VTS (above), the go-to transport for trips from Essex to Barry Island, joined by Smithy's Volvo 850 estate and Uncle Bryn's Citroën Xsara Picasso in the On Screen Cars exhibition.

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Mercedes crowned champion of 90210

Los Angeles' Rodeo Drive, one of the most famous shopping streets in the world, was taken over by classic vehicles on 15 June as part of the 30th Rodeo Drive Concours d'Elegance, with a 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K Spezial Roadster winning Best in Show. Held on Father's Day, 40,000 visitors came to the event, which, unusually among Stateside concours, is free and open to the public.

Awards were presented by local Jay Leno, including to Richard and Boni Losee for their 540K (left), while Kip Cyprus' 1925 Hispano-Suiza boat-tail racer (below left) landed the Chairman's Award. Elsewhere, the event raised funds for the police and fire service, as well as for the restoration of a retired 1975 Cadillac ambulance owned by the Beverly Hills Fire Department. Local police and fire chiefs were able to choose their own favourite cars, too, with a 1981 Lamborghini Countach LP400S and a 1968 Miura getting a trophy from each service respectively.

Stars to shine at the Palace

The brilliant Concours of Elegance returns to Hampton Court Palace from 5-7 September, with early cars confirmed including a trio of spectacular coachbuilt rarities. A 1951 Ferrari 212 Export Vignale Barchetta, one of just four built, will be joined by one of two 1951 Ferrari 212 Export Vignale Cabriolets and the last Ferrari 250MM built, a 1953 Vignale Spider Series II.

Other highlights among the 60-strong concours will include a unique 1926 Rolls-Royce Phantom I known as 'The Phantom of Love'. A gift from Clarence Gasque to his wife, the heiress to the Woolworths fortune, it features Brougham coachwork by Charles Clark & Sons and a remarkable, Rococo-inspired interior upholstered in rich tapestry. Elsewhere there will be the Levitt Concours for female enthusiasts, the Thirty Under 30 for younger owners, the Club Trophy and the C&SC-backed Restoration Showcase.

C&SC readers can take advantage of a 20% discount using the code 'CSC25' when purchasing tickets at concoursofelegance.co.uk and there is free parking in the dedicated C&SC car park for readers arriving in a pre-1990 classic – simply enter the code 'PRE1990' to order your pass.



Chelsea Cruise hits 50

More than 100 cars converged on Battersea Park, London, on the evening of 31 May, marking 50 years since *Custom Car* magazine led an assembly of hot rods there and kicked off what would become known as the 'Chelsea Cruise', which continues as an informal meet at the end of most summer months. American cars still dominate, but apart from a handful of Ford Model A rods and a V8-swapped Ford Consul, it was classics in largely original condition that lined Carriage Drive and the car park for the anniversary.

A 1970 Plymouth Road Runner SuperBird (above left) was a particular head-turner, alongside myriad Cadillac Series 62s from 1948, '52 and '54, two late-'50s Oldsmobile Super 88s, a delightful 1949 Dodge Wayfarer Roadster, a 1958 Edsel Pacer convertible and a lesser-seen 1965 Studebaker Daytona with the Fireball 283cu in V8. Along with a special turnout of Mustangs including a Shelby and Mach 1, there was a strong showing of modern classics and oddities such as a 1968 Volkswagen Type 147 'Fridolin'.

As daylight faded, most began circulating over Chelsea Bridge and along the King's Road, where the Saturday-night traffic found itself part of a rolling car show.



YANKS GO BIG AT BEAULIEU

The National Motor Museum hosted the biggest edition of its Custom and American show on 15 June, with 500-plus cars and nearly 10,000 visitors. Famed custom builder Andy Saunders unveiled his latest project, Faroo 1/3, a recreation of the long-lost 1967 Dodge Daroo (above).



CRIMSON CRUSADERS

Cash & Rocket held its annual, all-female fundraising tour from 5-8 June, with 30 cars – all red – driving from Rome to Taormina, Sicily. Each car was driven by two people, ranging from Alfa Spiders and an MGA to modern Ferraris, with founder Julie Brangstrup in a sizeable British contingent.



SUPERCARS HEAD TO PARIS

Rétromobile continues to grow, as it marks its 50th year in 2025. Having already launched a New York event in November, now the French show has announced Ultimate Supercar Garage, from 29 January-1 February 2026 in Paris. See retromobile.com



JULIAN GRIMWADE RIP

C&SC was saddened to learn of the death of historic racer Julian Grimwade, 72, in an accident at VSCC Donington Park on 24 May, while driving his Oakland Romano Special. A prolific and popular racer, Grimwade was well known for competing in his 1934 Nash-based Norris Special (above).

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Bryant (60) leads the all-Porsche 911 2.0L Cup grid through the gloom in the Ardennes



JEOPARDY FOR WET SPA

Difficult, changeable conditions hit Peter Auto's Spa-Classic from 23-25 May in Belgium, so perhaps it wasn't a great surprise that the experienced Oliver Bryant took victory in the wet, all-Porsche 911 2.0L Cup by more than 8 secs.

Car issues and crashes plagued several of the Classic Endurance Racing 1 frontrunners. The result? A Lola T70 one-two, with Nick Chester and Robin Ward winning, 3.8 secs from Jan Magnussen and Chris Ward. Twins Dennis and Marc Busch (Porsche 935) lined up eighth for Classic Endurance Racing 2, but surged into the lead and were unstoppable, victorious by 33 secs after an hour from Maxime Guenat's Lola T286.

John Spiers and Nigel Greensall looked set to land Classic Touring Challenge honours in their Ford Mustang, but a penalty meant the similar car of David Hart and Abraham Bontrup came out on top. Polesitter Sebastian Glaser (BMW 3.0 CSL) seemed in control in the Heritage Touring Cup, before Guenat (Ford Capri RS 3100) got ahead and then Olivier Hart in the 3.0 CSL he was sharing with father David, who went on to win despite

starting from the fourth row. Guenat claimed the safety-car-affected second race, from Hart/Hart and Glaser. And as the Jaguar E-types faded during the Sixties' Endurance contest, Olivier Hart and Bontrup came through to lead an all-Shelby Cobra podium.

A Full Course Yellow changed the complexion of the first The Gentlemen Challenge contest, with an immediate pitstop from Patrick Blakeney-Edwards and Gregor Fiske's Shelby Cobra helping ease their path to victory. They took third at the end of an eventful race two, as the Spiers/Greensall Lister Costin prevailed.

After two laps behind the safety

car to acclimatise, the Group Cs were released and Olivier Galant (Nissan R90CP) took control, winning by nearly 10 secs from polesitter Kriton Lendoudis in the ex-Michael Schumacher/Mauro Baldi Mercedes-Benz C11, who'd fluffed his braking at the start. Lendoudis didn't make the same mistake twice, however, taking top honours in race two.

Saturday's midday rain meant that Endurance Racing Legends 1 began behind a safety car. When it went green, François Perrodo (Audi R8 LMP) took the lead and resisted pressure to win. The safety car was also deployed for the start of the evening's rematch, but the rain made it too dangerous for the powerful GTs and it was called off.

In the first Endurance Racing Legends 2, Maxwell Lynn (Ferrari F430GTC Evo) claimed the spoils. Glaser (Porsche 993 GT2 Evo) dominated the second race, with a 16.76 secs lead at the chequer.

Perrodo's Audi R8 landed the sole Endurance Racing Legends 1 contest to run



Above, from top: Harts' evocative Belga CSL; Hart/Bontrup Mustang secured victory; Busch brothers' 935 scythes through the pack



Graham Fennimore took Grand Final win. Right: John Williams leads 70s Road Sports field; Formula Ford action



MOTORSPORT CLASSICS MEDIA

Historic Formula Fords out in force

The 50th anniversary of Historic Formula Ford 2000 took centre stage at the Historic Sports Car Club's Wolds Trophy, held at Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire on 24-25 May, with almost 40 competitors and four races. It culminated in a 20-minute Grand Final, contested by 30 cars and won by Graham Fennimore (Reynard SF81), who finished just 0.386 secs ahead of Michael Moyers aboard a Reynard SF79.

A damp qualifying meant some jumbled grids, including for 70s Road Sports. Polesitter John Williams (Porsche 911SC) charged to a clear win as others scrabbled behind, including Mark Bennett (MGB), who started 22nd and finished seventh. Williams also claimed race two.

Peter de la Roche was another two-time winner, with a clean sweep in Historic Formula Three aboard his Alexis Mk17. It was a similar story in Historic Formula Junior, with Adrian Russell (Condor S2) twice taking the front-engined spoils, while Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk5/7) did likewise in the rear-engined races. Frazer Gibney (Lotus Elan S1) won both combined Historic Roadsports with Historic Saloons encounters, but he had to overcome Mark Godfrey (Lotus Seven) in the first.

The Merlyns of Sam Mitchell (Mk20) and Grant (Mk20A) exchanged the lead several times in the opening Formula Ford bout, with Grant taking the flag by just 0.229 secs; Mitchell was ahead by 0.214 secs come the rematch. Jamie Thwaites and his Giulietta dominated both Alfa Romeo & Italian Intermarque Championship races.



DICKSON SIDDALL

Austin-Healeys assemble at Silverstone

At Equipe Classic Racing's Silverstone GP meeting on 7-8 June, the Syd Segal Trophy convened what is thought to have been the largest grid of Austin-Healeys anywhere for 30 years: 42 cars started the 40-minute encounter (top). From the off, it was a battle between the 3000s of Joe Willmott and brothers Jack/Oliver Chatham, who both took turns out in front; Willmott scooped top honours by only 0.313 secs.

A huge 46 cars contested the GTS race, but Tom Smith (MGB, above) came from seventh and managed the rain to claim victory. Neither Saturday's wet track nor Sunday's dry Tarmac stopped Bradley Smith (Norma M30) from securing two

Sports Prototype wins. Oliver Reuben did the same in Equipe Libre with Sports Racing Cars, in his first outing in a TVR Griffith. The Fords of Steve Dance (Capri RS 2600) along with Nick and son Harry Whale (Mk2 Escort, above) shared Equipe 70s spoils, and Stuart Emmett (MG ZR190) and Max Cawthorn (MGA) took an MG Cup win apiece, with Cawthorn overall victor.

Outside Equipe's programme, George Line (Dallara F308) and Ian Curley (Mini Miglia) were unbeatable in the Monoposto Championship and the Mini Challenge respectively, while Michael Gibbins and Joshua Laws each took an MCR S2n to the top of the Sports 2000 podium.



Cortina rises to the HERO Challenge

There was just a second in it come the end of HERO-ERA's HERO Challenge Two, on 31 May, when Angus McQueen and Mike Cochrane (Ford Cortina, above) beat father Paul and son James Bloxidge (Volkswagen Golf GTI, below).

The Bloxidges were leading at lunchtime, but after 150 miles around Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire, they lost out by the smallest of margins. And just 2 secs behind them, it was tied for third.

Ken and Sarah Binstead (Austin-Healey 3000) secured the final podium place from Dan Willan and Miles Fieldhouse (Fiat 124 Sport Spider), after Willan/Fieldhouse clipped a cone on the final test, incurring a 10-second penalty – without which they would have won.



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Clockwise from left:
Spiers/Greensall
McLaren; Williams
won MRL; Wilkins/
Scott Lamborghini;
Gentlemen Drivers



GARY HAWKINS/MOTOR BRACONNIER

Masters stars light up Brands Hatch

The Masters Historic Festival returned to Brands Hatch's Grand Prix circuit in Kent from 31 May-1 June with five grids.

First to come under starter's orders was the Masters GT Trophy, with Craig Wilkins and Aaron Scott (Lamborghini Gallardo GT3) winning this safety-car-hit encounter. They repeated the result the following day with an emphatic performance that had them finishing more than a minute clear of the similar car of Neil Glover and Luke Reade.

Yutaka Toriba in a Williams FW07C won Masters Racing Legends for 1966-'85 Formula One cars for the first time, overtaking

early leader Matthew Wrigley (Tyrrell 011) on the second lap and surviving a late safety car. Another historic brand was on top in the rematch, when Warren Briggs (McLaren M29) denied Wrigley. There were further McLaren wins as John Spiers and Nigel Greensall dominated both of the Sports Cars Legends races in their M1B.

John Tordoff drove a strong opening stint in the Gentlemen Drivers contest, but when Andrew Jordan took over their Lotus Elan, he stormed through to take victory by 4.417 secs from Mike Whitaker and Sam Hancock (TVR Griffith). And the hour-long, pre-'66 Touring Cars closed proceedings in style, as Tom Sharp (Ford Falcon) took the spoils by a mere 0.619 secs from Alex Taylor (Ford Mustang), despite a late mistake at Druids.



Endurance legends return to The Glen

Historic Sportscar Racing's Watkins Glen Classic 6 Hour was back at the track in New York state for the third time from 11-14 June, and this year it was also round two of the first HSR Classic Endurance Championship. The three Run Groups contested three rounds on Saturday, with each grid's fourth and final race on the 3.377-mile Grand Prix circuit on Sunday.

Groups A and B took to The Glen at the same time, and David Agretelis was the only driver all weekend to take a second HSR Classic win of the year, leading all four Group A segments in his Porsche 911 S/T (above right). There was a clean sweep in Group B, too, with Dan Ammann and Owen Trinkler (Porsche Cayman GT4 RS) taking their maiden HSR Classic victory.

Stealing the show and Run Group C spoils were Gérard López and triple Le Mans winner Marcel Fässler on their event debut. This left 2024 winners Pierce Marshall and Eric Foss to duel with Juan Gonzalez and Butch Leitzinger, the former duo securing runner-up spot in an all-Cadillac DPi podium.



HSR/JESSICA JOHNS

Paddock profile



STUART EMERY
CAR Volvo 242
SERIES Retro
Rallycross
Championship

"I got into watching rallycross in the 1980s and first entered an event in 1988. Having the chance to compete against those iconic cars and drivers was a no-brainer for me – it brings back happy memories of the cars I grew up with.

"I love it and have had many memorable moments, but 2014's race at Croft sticks in my mind. I had to finish no lower than fifth to win the British Super National Championship – but I pulled off my gearlever on the first lap! Luckily I finished fifth and won the title. Retro Rallycross is such fun and one day I'd love to race my Volvo at Höljes in Sweden."



MAX EAREY

Kings of the Castles crowned

The 21st edition of the Three Castles Trial, from 3-6 June, was won by just 2 secs after a mighty three-test, closed-road finale on the Great Orme. Graham Walker and Sean Toohey (Lotus Elan) led from the start, as Mark Godfrey and Ryan Pickering (Ford Escort) tried in vain to unseat them. In a similar battle for third, David and Sally Ward (Lancia Fulvia Coupé 1600HF) beat Peter and Louise Myles (Porsche 911) and David Coxon and Peter Hawkins (Austin-Healey 3000 Mk3). Robert and Tim Carr were the top novice crew in their Sunbeam Imp Sport, while Sue Shoosmith and Trina Harley won the Heritage class in the rally's oldest car, a 1926 Bentley 3/4½ Litre.



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Clockwise from main:
the Riley RMA with
Bonallack estate body;
missing wing can't be
found; wooden roof
frame; tired interior



STORED RILEY IS UNUSUAL ESTATE

Graham Proud has, for the past 28 years, been one of the organisers of a small classic car group known as the Whitby Area Classic Vehicle Club. One of the organisation's members, Dick Hoyle, recently became unwell and went into hospital, and the club has been asked to dispose of his three vehicles. A tatty Triumph 2000 has found a home, but the other two are still available, despite being very interesting and unusual.

There is a 1930 Fiat van, which is in a semi-dismantled condition and has been dry-stored since the 1980s, and the third car is described as a 1947 Riley RMA estate. This possibly unique

machine features a bespoke rear body produced by an obscure coachbuilder called Bonallack.

In 1825, Jacob Bonallack moved from Cornwall to Forest Gate, London, and by 1846 he had his own firm producing bodywork for horse-drawn commercial vehicles. In 1905 it moved over to building bodies for the motorised commercial-vehicle world. It is believed that the firm made very few car bodies post-war, and these were all of the estate type bar one convertible. By the 1970s the business had been taken over by Alcan Aluminium.

At first glance the Riley looks like one of the series of late-1930s



From top: stripped 1930 Fiat van has been stored for 40 years; simple cabin

special-bodied cars that featured an 'Airline' streamlined fastback profile. It isn't a half-timbered 'woodie' estate car – although Bonallack is reported to have built two further RMs with the same basic shape in part-wooden bodies – but a conventional estate with a single-piece lift-up tailgate. The Riley appears to be virtually complete, except for a missing rear wing that cannot be found.

Registered CJD 164, the car is thought to have been purchased by Dick in 1977 from someone in Guisborough, North Yorkshire, and he subsequently used it until 1982, when it was put away in the garage and never moved again. For more details or to enquire about buying either car, email grahamproud28@gmail.com



The 2½ Litre's body panels have all now been refitted. Right: neat tail styling



A (NEARLY) REVIVED LEA-FRANCIS

In 1947, Lea-Francis decided it was time to rejoin the sports-car market and a 1½-litre car was unveiled at the motor show. This was boosted to 2½ litres in 1950 when a 'big four' engine by Hugh Rose (of Riley fame) was fitted.

Derek Seward has a pragmatic approach to car restoration: "It is my hobby, and although I don't do it to make money, I don't want to lose money either. I have found abandoned projects are best."

HGG 3 is a 1950 Lea-Francis 2½ Litre Sports, first registered in Glasgow, that was advertised on Facebook in 2004 and sounded as if it fitted his criteria. He was



Above: Lea-Francis as bought in 2004. Right: trial fitting of the supercharger



astonished to hear from previous owner David, a retired joiner, that the car had been off the road since 1972. David had bought the car as a runner, but he soon found that there was considerable knocking

from the big ends when it was warm. He decided on a major rebuild and stripped the car. There was significant expenditure on engine parts, plus the gearbox, clutch, suspension and steering

box. The body was stripped and five new Pirelli Cinturato tyres were purchased (for £11 each!).

The following year all work stopped due to David launching a business, getting married and starting a family. He returned to the car in the mid-1980s, but the restored engine wasn't started and the body panels were never refitted. It was then put away in a dark, dry garage.

"The car came with an old WW2 ammunition box containing the parts of an Arnott supercharger," says Derek. "This had been fitted by the car's long-term third owner, an RAF pilot, in the mid-'50s and necessitated a bulge in the side of the bonnet. It is believed to be the only 2½ Litre Sports fitted with a supercharger."

The car is now well on the way to being rebuilt, with the engine running on the original twin SU carbs. Derek had a trial fitting of the supercharger, but plans to resist using it until he has the car going well. He knows virtually nothing of the Leaf's early history, but knows that 85 of this model were built from 1950-'52, of which 74 survive, 54 in running order – soon to be joined by a 55th.

A G26'S LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY

In 2024, Tony Luxton bought a Ginetta G26 to join his collection of five other G26s and G31s, known to friends as 'The G26 Preservation Society'. "The main consideration was that the car should go to someone who would appreciate it as something a bit special," explains Tony, "and not break it for spares to rebuild a Cortina."

The car's story starts with an ex-RAF officer who in his younger days built a Special using a Fairlite glassfibre body made by the Walklett Brothers (who went on to found Ginetta). On 16 May 1985 he ordered a G26 Superkit, which came with a larger glass sunroof and expensive Richfield seats trimmed in

leather. Some work was done, but the kit remained unfinished for 30 years. A family member bought it, but never finished the project before swapping it for a Mini Mayfair. Last August it was acquired by Tony, who got it to a state in which it could be displayed on the Ginetta Owners' Club stand at the NEC Classic Motor Show (right).

Back in 2021 Trevor Pyman, the club's registrar, had helped get the car an age-related number (C878 JGL), and it will shortly be on the road for the first time in 40 years. "The wheels and tyres bought with the kit in 1985 have held their pressure, so the air in them is 1985 air," adds Tony.





Blue Hino was delivered new to Belgium. Below right: green car arrived in The Netherlands in 1967



HIDDEN HINO PAIRING

The Japanese company Hino was formed in 1942, when its main product was commercial vehicles. In 1953 it began producing the Renault 4CV under licence, then in 1961 Hino brought out its own car.

In 1965, the firm announced plans to build a new factory to assemble the Hino Contessa in The Netherlands. The future was looking bright, but two years later the plant still wasn't there: the millions invested by the local government and the banks had apparently evaporated, and the man responsible washed his hands of the project. Hino was taken over by Toyota in 1967.

As a result, the 150 Contessas that were eventually sold in The

Netherlands were all imported from Japan. It was always thought that none of these Dutch cars had survived, but shortly after writing an article about the Hino debacle, Dutch journalist Jeroen Booij learned about two Contessas that were hidden in a barn in The Netherlands. Owner Peter van den Hoogen is a fan of the Michelotti design, and he owns several other vehicles by the Italian stylist.

The light-green Contessa was delivered new by Louwman & Parqui in April 1967, shortly after the plans for the manufacturing facility in The Netherlands fell apart. The blue car was delivered new in Belgium through local concessionaire Willy Beullens and is likely to be one of the 100 Contessas that were waiting at the port in Rotterdam when Hino's bankruptcy was declared. Both examples had been put away in storage decades ago.

"But they are both complete," says Peter, "even though it may look different in the photos!" He is now considering selling them; email peter@coup.nl



INCINERATED J12 FINDS A HOME

Most cars featured in *Lost & found* have been off the road for many years, but the case of this 1934 Hispano-Suiza J12 Cabriolet is quite different. Its first owner was Belgium-born Baron Édouard-Jean Empain, who was an industrialist with railway interests. He approached Hispano-Suiza in 1934 to order a J12 chassis to be fitted with a body by Fernandez & Darrin, whose works was close to the Hispano factory. Some time later this was removed and the chassis was fitted with a cabriolet-style body by Vanvooren.

Baron Empain used the car widely in Europe, but soon after WW2 the J12 was exported to the USA, perhaps taken back there by a returning serviceman.

By 2013 it had reached

the top show classes and was a Best of Show contender when displayed by The Hon Sir Michael Kadoorie at Pebble Beach. In 2024, it won the Alec Ulmann Trophy at Pebble Beach for the car that 'best embodies the combination of excellence in performance and elegance in design' (above).

After the competition, the car was travelling in a transporter down Highway 68 when it caught fire, and it was severely damaged (right). It was decided to sell the remains at Broad Arrow's Amelia Island sale this year, where it fetched a hefty \$224,000. It will be fascinating to see what happens to it next.



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HURRICANE WITH REAL HISTORY

On 18 July 1946, Land and Water Speed Record holder Sir Malcolm Campbell took delivery of an Armstrong Siddeley Hurricane, one of the first new models of car to be offered after WW2. The firm had been planning the Hurricane from as early as 1943, and the first car was finished in 1945 while the factory was still on war work.

Sir Malcolm's car was registered KPF 229 by Surrey County Council and first featured in *Lost & found* in June 2011. At that time it had just resurfaced after having been stored for 42 years, mainly in a damp garage. The owner's son had inherited the property and approached the Armstrong Siddeley Owners' Club for advice. After some time Peter Pearson, who was then in charge of the club stores, found a Swiss aeronautical engineer to take on the project.

Since then the car has undergone a complete strip-down to its component parts, then all metal items were either galvanised, powder-coated or chromed. The buyer was unable to finish the car, however, and it returned to the UK, where a few members of the ASOC continued the work.

In 2020, Peter offered to buy the car from the club and complete the



From top: Siddeley in 2011; interior was tired but complete; as it presents for sale today



restoration, but a forthcoming house move – plus an electrical fault that he cannot get to the bottom of – has unfortunately necessitated its sale. It was put up for auction by Charterhouse at its 26 June sale at the Haynes Motor Museum in Sparkford, Somerset.

"Sir Malcolm Campbell used the Hurricane as his regular road car," says Richard Bromell of Charterhouse. "This was probably the last car he owned because he died on New Year's Eve, 1948."



TR'S MODEL IS A MYSTERY

The website barnfinds.com recently offered for sale a car labelled as a 1962 Triumph TR3A, with the chassis number CT29112, which had been lying in the driveway of a Connecticut, USA, home for many years and was looking a very sad sight. The uncle of the seller inherited the car from the previous owner

in 1972 and started a restoration, but this stalled. He has since passed away, so the car was in search of a new home.

As is so often the case online, the site's users wrote in to comment on the advert, pointing out that it couldn't be a TR3A with a CT chassis number. Some suggested it was a TR3B – one of the batch of TR3As built at the request of US dealers who felt that the TR4 was too civilised for their traditional customers; others said it must be a TR4.

Mike Ellis, the TR2-3 registrar for the TR Register, confirms that it is definitely a TR3A, but points out that only TR4s featured a CT chassis number – so there is certainly some confusion.



Look familiar?

Want to track down a lost love or looking for history on your current classic? Send details and pictures to the p9 address or email requests to alastair.clements@haymarket.com



ON A PORSCHE'S TRAIL

Andrew Jackman is keen to trace the lovely black Porsche 911 2.2E his late father owned in the early 1980s. Registered NEN 911J, the car was originally Signal Orange. Andrew has traced the owner who bought it from his father, but after that the trail goes cold – although it appears that the Porsche is still on the road. Email andrewjackman59@yahoo.co.uk



WHERE IS MISSING MG?

Mike Hickson is also on a nostalgic search, this time for an MG TA in which his late father used to commute every day from Newbury to Basingstoke. Registered DKT 634 and wearing the chassis number TA1179, the car is thought to have been in Ontario, Canada, in 2018, but there are no subsequent records for it. "The picture [above] is of me 'driving' and my sister acting as co-pilot," says Mike. "It was taken in around 1970." Email hicksonmike@yahoo.co.uk



MICHAEL WARE

Former curator of the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu. Send submissions to waremichael29@gmail.com

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In 1972, famed designer Gérald Genta created an oxymoron. Priced more than many precious metal rivals, the 'luxury stainless steel timepiece' was not an immediate success. But eventually its tough, elegant body, integrated bracelet and patterned dial caught on. A watch that dressed up for dinner. Or down, at the pool. Today's 40mm, base automatic of that original watch costs £22,850 more than the 'Twelve' - named for its dodecagon-sided bezel and rear lock ring. Our watch is thinner, goes deeper and offers a choice of C1/BL Grade X1-lumed dials. A polished, brushed and sandblasted case of daylight (and night time) robbery?

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Corkscrew depicts Porsche 962C RLR at Laguna Seca. Above: King Henri, with Matra MS670B, '73 Le Mans



Bold giclée print features the 499P heading for Ferrari's long-awaited win at Le Mans in 2023



Bugatti Baby II, hand-painted child's car for Hedley Studios. Left: Brigitte in a Ferrari 250 California Spider



JEAN-YVES TABOUROT

A bold graphic style makes this French former engineer's work popular for private commissions

From an apprenticeship with one of France's most famous Ferrari specialists to recent success as an automotive artist, Jean-Yves Tabourot's journey has involved some spectacular machinery and dramatic moments. Little wonder his art connects with enthusiasts.

Born in Clermont-Ferrand, Jean-Yves began his career as a mechanic at Auvergne Moteurs with Philippe Gardette in the '70s. "It was a wonderful, old-style workshop and Philippe had great clients including Pierre Bardinon, Charles Pozzi and Jess Pourret," says Jean-Yves. "I worked on some amazing Ferraris such as Pourret's 250GTO, and visited Bardinon's Circuit du Mas du Clos museum."

A lifelong passion for rallying led Jean-Yves to later join Bouhier Engineering in Paris, where he worked on gearbox development: "They were dramatic times, supporting Group B at events including the Rallye Monte-Carlo and Tour de Corse. Testing at night in the south of France, hanging off the rollcage in the back of a Peugeot 205 Turbo 16, was wild."

Jean-Yves' talents were soon in demand, leading to a move to England to work with Ricardo and later Williams: "I helped build the Jaguar C-X75 for the 007 movie *Spectre* and supported it during filming in Rome, Longcross and Brunei. I did a C-X75 painting on location in Italy and all of the stunt team wanted prints of it."

Frustrated by electric-vehicle development, and boosted by the success of the Bond prints, Jean-Yves' artistic ability led to a new career. "At school I had a great art teacher, Gilles Cohendy, who really encouraged my drawing," he recalls. "I remember being

fascinated by Bardinon's art collection, where I discovered the work of Hideki Yoshida. He was an inspiration and I was lucky to meet him at Magny-Cours, where he gave me the idea of combining my passions for art and cars."

Following redundancy from Williams, Jean-Yves began painting in earnest during lockdown and his collection made its debut at the first London Classic Car Show. The bold, vibrant acrylics were a sell-out and led to commissions from both specialists and enthusiasts. Recent highlights have included work for Singer and Cosworth.

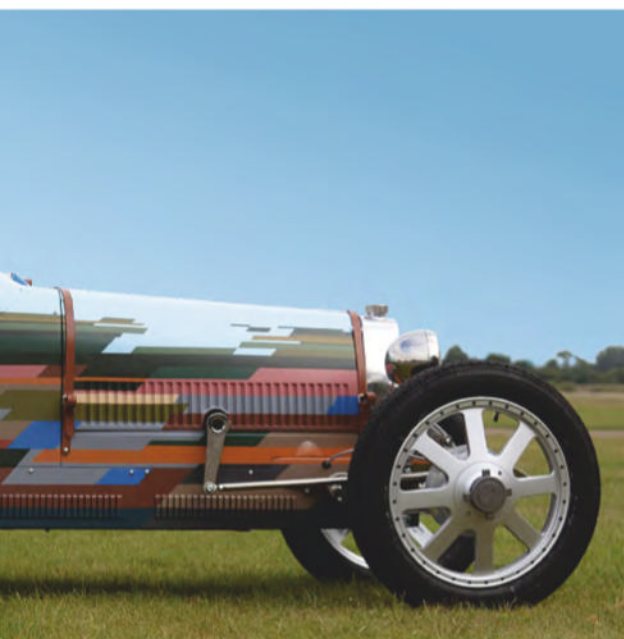
Jean-Yves' distinctive style has adorned bodywork for the Bugatti Baby II, with a commission from Hedley Studios. "I think the T35 is the greatest automotive design," he says. "Inspired by the Art Deco period and artist Sonia Delaunay, my finished car was shown at the Royal Automobile Club's Art of Motoring. The colours came from a twilight painting of an E-type at Goodwood. The Revival and the Le Mans Classic are favourite events."

Over the years, Jean-Yves has owned some fascinating cars, including his trusty burgundy Porsche 911SC: "I've had it since 2017 and rebuilt it myself. It's a bit ratty, but I have had some great drives in France including a ski trip. I even deliver paintings in it."

His first car was a Renault 4, but it's a Fiat Panda he misses most: "I rebuilt it in Philippe's garage, and he even let me spray it with spare Ferrari paint. Sadly, I rolled it on a narrow mountain road – I'd love to have another." **MW**

For more, call 07492 749750, see jytabespokeart.com or follow @jyt_bespoke_art on Instagram

Porsche 911s by Singer feature in the private commission *DLS* (left) and fantasy scene *Great Ocean Road* (below)



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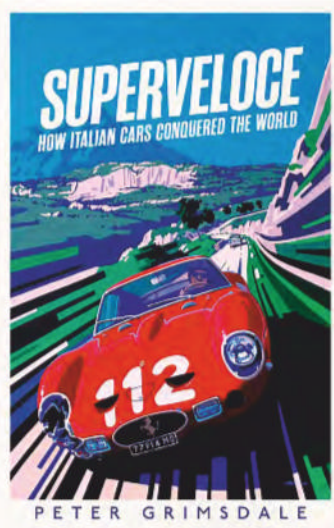
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Book of the month



'Grimsdale pulls together these Italian automotive giants and shines a light on how their fascinating stories are connected'

SUPERVELOCITY

Peter Grimsdale's third book on motoring is a shift from his previous titles, *High Performance* and *Racing in the Dark*, which covered Britain's car-making glory days and Bentley's 1920s Le Mans heroics respectively. This time around, the author has looked beyond these shores and set about telling the story of Italy's motoring past, from turn-of-the-century pioneers to Enzo Ferrari and Ferruccio Lamborghini's road cars of the 1960s. A lot of ground to cover, then. But don't fret, Grimsdale has a knack for making light work of big, intimidating subjects and once again he's transformed historical accounts into charming stories, giving life to century-old tales.

SuperveLOCITY is as much about the colourful industry characters as it is about the vehicles they created. Most of the industrialists, designers and engineers are worthy of their own biographies – and much has been written about them already – but perhaps the most fascinating thing about this 368-page book is the way in which it pulls together these automotive giants and shines a light on how their stories are connected. The reader is invited to follow Ettore Bugatti in an early cyclecar race, where he beats Giovanni Agnelli, before the former moves to France and later starts his eponymous business. Or how, when Fiat was in its infancy, Agnelli worked with Vincenzo Lancia and Felice Nazzaro on the Italian marque's earliest models.

Soon after, they met a young Battista 'Pinin' Farina, who had recently moved to Turin and joined his brother's *carrozzeria*. Whatever happened to him, eh? Meanwhile, references to the political backdrop of 20th-century Italy – including Benito Mussolini's tightening grip on the country and Agnelli's determination to keep Fiat at arm's length from the fascist dictator – provide a useful history lesson, too.

Once you know the characters and their backgrounds, it's also much easier to become absorbed in the adventure and absurdity of 20th-century motorsport, whether it's Vincenzo Florio's race around Sicily – early Targa Florio entrants were advised to carry a gun to fend off wolves and bandits – or the incredible Peking to Paris challenge, or Ferrari and Ford's infamous Le Mans battle. The gripping descriptions of these famous duels more than live up to the promise of Tim Layzell's striking artwork on the front cover.

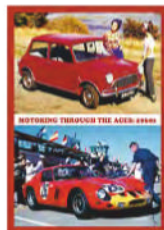
Throughout, Grimsdale's forensic level of research and passion for the subject are clear. It's one thing to write about the exploits of car makers from your home country, but to create an all-encompassing book on Italy's automotive past must have been a different challenge entirely. Among others, he consulted Italian journalist and long-time tutor Beppe Severgnini, whom the author says 'dismissed any misgivings I had about a foreigner venturing into such a sacred area of Italian heritage'. And it's a good thing he did, too, because Grimsdale has surely produced one of the most accessible and entertaining books on the subject, for enthusiasts and newcomers alike. **RS £25** Peter Grimsdale, Simon & Schuster. ISBN 9781398513037



Ford Mustang 60 years

This inspired title recounts America's favourite pony car

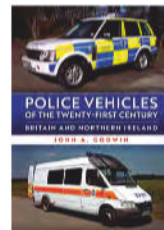
through 60 entertaining stories. From Gale Halderman's 1962 styling ideas, sketched at night on his kitchen table, to the development of the radical GTD, this stylish, varied 256-page landscape book is perfect to dip into. Movie stars, dragsters, Indy pace cars, Trans-Am racers and collections are all covered in Donald Farr's precise style. Highlights include Parnelli Jones' spectacular charge to victory at Riverside in 1970, the barn-find of Larry Shinoda's 1969 Mach 1, and street racer Joe Ruggirello's 8.3-litre Mustang II, 'Sudden Death.' **MW £40** Donald Farr, Motorbooks. ISBN 9780760389201



Motoring through the 20th century

This compendium of cars is a handy, multi-volume, image-led tour of motoring through the decades, with

c150 pages each on the 1950s, '60s and '70s, then the 1980s and '90s combined, primarily from a UK perspective. Generous captions and topic summaries punctuate short chapters covering marques, motorsport, electric cars, concepts and even crash testing, but detail is limited and glaring omissions include the likes of the Mazda MX-5. Glossy pages make the most of some interesting archive imagery, but even the £94.96 bundle price-point looks well beyond these ringbound offerings. **AM £29.99 each** Auto Heritage (auto-heritage.co.uk)



Police vehicles of the twenty-first century

If you wanted to know everything about British police cars and more, this is the book for you. At times,

author John Godwin's exhaustive knowledge is relentless, becoming a never-ending stream of facts, acronyms and police jargon, but there are some explanations and fascinating facts to be found. For example, how police cars are chosen for service, or that Heathrow Airport has three armour-plated Metropolitan Police Ford F450s. It really is *every* vehicle, including helicopters and 'bikes. Though it struggles for readability at times, real police-car nerds will have to add this book to their collection. **CC £15.99** John Godwin, Amberley. ISBN 9781398126473

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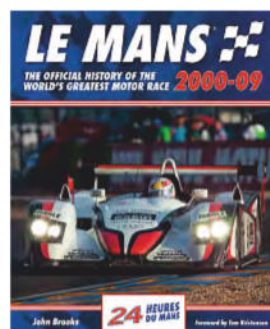
Mercedes and Benz Racing 1900-1955

With more than 1200 superbly reproduced historic photographs spanning spindly veterans to the all-conquering, streamlined Grand Prix cars and sports-prototypes, this 590-page book is a visual treat.

Author Roy Smith makes no claim that this is a definitive history, but rather 'An appreciation'. Full-colour scans of the monochrome images, quality printing and a crisp layout in landscape do justice to each era. Some photographs will look familiar to ardent Silver Arrows fans, but Smith has unearthed many rarely seen gems, too, such as those taken around the Masaryk Grand Prix circuit in 1937.

He also succinctly provides the background to each era, including a previously unpublished interview with the late John Fitch. The Mille Miglia victories from 1931 and '55 are vividly presented, as well as lesser-known South American events such as the Brazilian Mountain GP, in which Hans Stuck set a new record with his SSKL.

Aside from a few miscaptions, the wealth of spectacular images will thoroughly absorb every historic Mercedes enthusiast. **MW** £150 Roy Smith, Veloce. ISBN 9781836440024



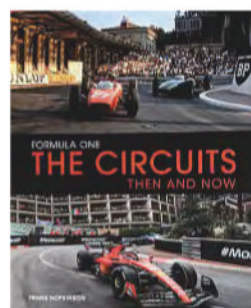
Le Mans 2000-09

John Brooks is a superb photographer, but this book reveals that he is also a fine writer. To describe it as image-rich would be an understatement: every entrant and every car is captured, while those photographs taken at dusk and dawn are particularly atmospheric.

The book is logically laid out for easy comparisons across chapters specific to the 10 years covered, each with a brief synopsis of qualifying and the race, plus a fascinating section on the organisation. Comprehensive detail is given to the teams, cars and drivers, with the author never afraid to mention the ill-prepared or over-ambitious, and a table showing the race position for every starter for each of the 24 hours.

The final chapter lists marque records – including intriguing single entries for the likes of AutoExe, Norma and Debora – and drivers, from Christian Abt to Charles Zwolsman Jr. There are fastest laps, margins of victory and reasons for retirement. Altogether, a worthy addition to Evro's decade-by-decade series. **PS**

£70 John Brooks, Evro Publishing. ISBN 9781910505717



Formula One: The Circuits

If you enjoy comparing tracks past and present, then you'll prize this fascinating, well-priced 240-page book. Formula One journalist Frank Hopkinson showcases 42 circuits, from the long-lost Aintree to the revitalised Zandvoort. Each chapter is introduced colourfully by Hopkinson with a circuit map, historic highlights

and inspired photographs of changes through the years.

The author has a tendency towards the sensational side of track history, such as Ricardo Rodríguez's fatal practice crash in November 1962 at the tricky, bumpy Mexican venue instigated by his father.

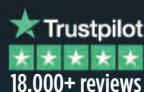
Classic French circuits also feature strongly, including Pau, Paul Ricard, Dijon and Charade. The details of the super-fast Reims-Gueux highlight the tragic accident of Annie Bousquet in 1956.

The excellent image selection includes many wide corner shots that vividly capture a circuit's evolving layout. The matching angles of Eau Rouge underline such development. **MW**

£30 Frank Hopkinson, Ivy Press. ISBN 9780711298484

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Model of the month



FERRARI 126 C2

1:18, MCG, £72.99

MCG's top-value Ferrari 126 C2 has poignantly been released as a pair, as a tribute to troubled teammates Gilles Villeneuve and Didier Pironi. The KKK-turbocharged C2 was revised by new Scuderia arrival Harvey Postlethwaite and, with Ferrari's first full monocoque made in the UK, the 600bhp C2 handled better than the earlier C1. Prospects looked strong for a Ferrari title, but first the tragic death of Villeneuve during practice at Zolder and later Pironi's F1 career-ending shunt in the wet at Hockenheim proved a mighty challenge for the team. With Patrick Tambay and Mario Andretti joining the equipe, the 126 C2 still won the constructors' title, with Pironi runner-up to Keke Rosberg for the drivers' championship by just five points. Both models include driver figures with the helmets of Villeneuve (pictured) and Pironi.

1:18

- 1** Solido's 1993 Rallye Monte-Carlo Lancia Delta HF Integrale, £65.99
- 2** Solido's 1980 Autobianchi A112 Mk5 Abarth, £58.99
- 3** Solido's 1990 BMW 850CSi, £55.99
- 4** Cult's 1981 Ford Capri 2.8 Turbo, £206.99

1:43

- 5** Spark's 1955 Rallye Monte-Carlo Porsche 356, £69.99
- 6** Spark's 1984 Spa 24 Hours Alfa Romeo GTV6, £69.99
- 7** Spark's Desiré Wilson 1979 Race of Champions Tyrrell 008, £69.99
- 8** AutoCult's 1934 Aero Sport Coupé, €113.95 (autocult-models.de)
- 9** Avenue43's Anadol STC-16, €113.95 (autocult-models.de)
- 10** Spark's 1973 Le Mans Duckhams LM, £69.99
- 11** AutoCult's 1935 Singer Popular 'Viena Capellanes', €113.95 (autocult-models.de)
- 12** Spark's 1925 Le Mans 24 Hours Chenard et Walcker, £69.99
- 13** Spark's 1996 Silverstone BPR McLaren F1 GTR, £69.99

Edited by Mick Walsh. Unless stated, all items are available from Diecast Legends (01483 407555; diecastlegends.com); 10% discount for orders from C&SC readers quoting 'CS825'





Pick of the month

TWIST AND GREASE

Wheel-bearing lubrication usually consists of spreading a layer of grease on the component by hand, but for a more fastidious – and less messy – approach, Gunson's portable packer (part number 77177) might well be a worthwhile investment. It can help to extend the life of any open-style bearing by delivering an even coat of grease to the rollers. The cone-shaped, wind-down tool forces lubricant into every nook and cranny, while the tapered support keeps the bearing wedged in place and the transparent polycarbonate case lets you see when the job is done. The £60.82 device fits bearings of up to 88mm diameter. gunson.co.uk



Dyson's deep clean

Dyson has packed its bagless vacuum-cleaner technology into a handheld product designed for use with cars. The 33cm-long Car+Boat cleaner has a motor that spins up to 11,000rpm and is claimed to be the most powerful of its kind. The 1.9kg unit comes with three attachments and costs £249.99. A five-hour charge provides up to 50 mins of use, depending on setting. dyson.co.uk



Quarterlight fantastic

MGB roadster quarterlights are now back in production for the first time in more than 25 years. MGOC Spares has worked with UK specialists – including jewellers – to recreate these stainless-steel items. Modern touches include phosphor-bronze hinges finished in chrome, and improved weather sealing. The brand-new quarterlights (part number BHH706/7) are priced at £1195 for a pair, and are suitable for MGBs built after 1970. mgocspares.co.uk



All eyes on you

The Moon Equipment Company is one of the biggest players in the hot-rodding and drag-racing scene, and its stylish logo – created by a Disney cartoon illustrator – can be seen on dragsters the world over. The firm has leaned on its 75-year history with this retro-style bowling shirt. It's available in mint or ivory for \$120, and will surely make you the most fashionable enthusiast on the strip. mooneyesusa.com

Tested this month

TITAN TTB2200PRW

This Titan pressure washer promises 150bar of pressure, 2.2kW of power and a flow rate of 500 litres per hour. Unless you're a pressure-washer aficionado, that likely means nothing to you. But the crux of the matter is that this £129.99 product offers a similar punch to rivals that cost £100 more. So, what's in the box? You get a couple of nozzles, a patio cleaner, a snow-foam bottle and a brush you can use on your classic's wheels. The washer itself is plenty powerful enough to get the worst muck off in a pre-wash (use it on the 'fan' setting so as not to damage paintwork) and wash away the suds after a soak. The 8m built-in hose means you're not constantly tugging at the mains pipe, too. It offers good bang for your buck – or should that be pressure for your pounds? **RS** screwfix.com



CURIOUS LONDON GUIDE

Curious London is a new series of travel guides that explores the capital's past, mainly through 20th-century sites that you can visit. The first, *Motoring in and around the city*, is a whistle-stop tour of automotive highlights. It includes former showrooms, such as Wolseley's neoclassical premises in Piccadilly, now a restaurant; disused car parks, including the Grade-II listed Lex Garage in Soho; and other relics, such as the Ferodo bridge on Blackmore Drive. As well as obvious choices – Ace Café London and Michelin House will be familiar to many – there are plenty of lesser-known places. The £5.99 fold-out guide is fine inspiration, although not every entry has a photo and the Minimalist map doesn't give exact locations. **RS** copycreativelondon.com



8/10



6/10

Classic patch-up

ProXL has expanded its range of bodywork fillers with a line-up designed with the UK's climate in mind. Ultrafill Gold and Gold Plus are aimed at experts, but the polyester mixture has been developed to be easy to apply and sand down, so keen enthusiasts can have a go at repairing minor dings and imperfections. A 1-litre tin of Gold Plus costs £20.33. proxl.com



Tidy little tools

Maintaining the Austin J40 has become a serious business, and Austin Pedal Cars has released a range of stylish toolboxes for

DiY enthusiasts who preserve and restore these small-scale classics. They're available in various colours and two sizes (the small one, pictured, is about 30cm long and costs £34.50), and made by Toyo Steel in Japan. austinpelcars.com



Singing its praises

Before you ditch your classic's period 8-Track player for a retro lookalike that discreetly packs Bluetooth connectivity, you should know that there are still a few artists determined to keep the historic format alive. English rock band the Quireboys has released its latest album, *Wardour Street*, on the old-school medium. The limited-edition tape costs £59 and each one is signed and numbered. quireboysofficial.com



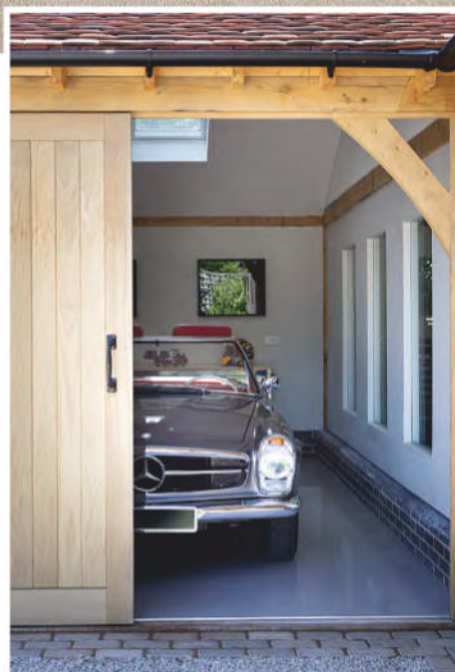
LASER SYPHON HAND PUMP

There are a few items that you simply must have in your toolbox because they are invaluable in the right situation, and a syphon pump should be on the list – as I was reminded recently when my car's fuel tank needed to be

9/10

emptied. Laser's simple one-way hand pump (part number 3917) was ideal for this task, for which a slowly, slowly approach was required. With a 1/4in diameter and 1650mm overall length, it can be used to drain radiators, top up antifreeze or syphon fuel (just ensure you rinse it thoroughly after each use). Draining a petrol tank can be an alarming task, but with the gentle flow controllable via a hand-operated pump, the job was completed efficiently and without drama. Best of all, it's a bargain at just £6.31. DC lasertools.co.uk

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Mick WALSH

Most enthusiasts are hit with a wave of nostalgia when seeing a parent's old car, but few early automotive memories match the experiences of Melanie Fitzgerald.

As a youngster living in Bahrain in the early 1960s, she would relish trips to the beach and out to the desert in a spectacular Invicta Low Chassis, which her father Michael had restored. "At seven years old I used to sit on my dad's knees and steer the car," Melanie vividly recalls. "I couldn't reach the pedals. For me and my friends it was the most exotic car on the island, and they fondly remember standing on the running boards. We used to take it out to the desert on dragon-hunting trips, which involved trying to catch lizards with Dad's big leather gauntlet."

But it was nocturnal rides under a full moon that were particularly magical. "With the roof down I loved the cool air and the fantastic view of the starry sky, which reflected in the long bonnet. For the start of Ramadan we'd drive out at sunset to see the cannon being fired from the fort. I think Dad was happiest working under the Invicta with his back on the warm sand."

The acquisition of the pre-war great in Bahrain is a remarkable story, and had her father not saved it, the Corsica-bodied Invicta would undoubtedly have been scrapped. How the straight-six, 4½-litre, 100mph drophead ended up there remains a mystery, but after an ignition problem started a fire behind the dash, the owner, one Hugh Pinson, was ready to send the Invicta to the junkyard. Thankfully Michael did a deal for £25, and the S-type's rebuild became a feature of the front garden of the military married quarters. "It attracted lots of local interest," says Melanie.

Not surprisingly, spares were impossible to source but, being a practical type working in the docks for the Bahrain Petroleum Company, Michael had access to the workshops. With a crate of beer as payment, the engineers were only too happy to repair or fabricate a part. Much of the bodywork was sandblasted and repainted in the boatyards, and when a rear wing accidentally dropped into the deep harbour waters, an ex-pearl diver retrieved it. "I was fanatical about the Invicta and had everything cleaned," says the 98-year-old. "The screws in the body frame had all corroded due to the humid atmosphere, but I neatly dovetailed-in

"We took it to the desert on dragon-hunting trips, which involved catching lizards with Dad's big leather gauntlet"

Below, from top: the Invicta at the start of the local motor club's hillclimb; Fitzgerald family life in Bahrain revolved around the beloved S-type



repairs. I had always wanted a British Racing Green car, so that's how it was brush-painted, but keeping the bare aluminium bonnet. After tuning, the Invicta always started quickly and sounded great. When motoring through the narrow streets, I enjoyed double-declutching just to hear the exhaust sound. The local oil was very crude, but I was able to refuel at a nearby naval base, and it always ran better with a drop of kerosene added." Amazingly, Michael even managed to track down a few Meadows engine parts in Bahrain. "I remember hearing about a local Lagonda that had been scrapped," he recalls. "Luckily a few parts survived."

A Bahrain motor club was eventually formed, and when it organised a hillclimb at Rimrock, Michael entered the rebuilt Invicta. "It was less than a mile and not much of a hill, but it tempted out a few locals," he says.

When the Fitzgeralds eventually returned to England in 1966, the Invicta was also shipped back home. With a young family, however, it soon became impractical and after 17 years of ownership, S140 was eventually sold. The latest owner has now commissioned an exacting restoration by Clark & Carter, returning the S-type to its original ivory-and-black colour scheme before it heads to Pebble Beach this year, where it will star in a special Invicta centenary class. Wouldn't it be cool if Michael's old Bahrain registration plates were fitted?



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Simon TAYLOR

Trackside photographers often get a better view of a race than anyone else, even though they may not realise what their camera has seen until they go through the results afterwards – in the old days, when they developed the film in the darkroom and saw the negatives. Sometimes their work can provide vital evidence to explain incidents or resolve disputes.

Nearly 30 years ago an elderly family friend, Michael Legge, gave me a pile of racing photographs he had taken as a schoolboy, including the negative of a lucky shot during the 1932 Brooklands 500 Miles. That photo helped to exonerate John Cobb from causing a lurid fatal accident.

Both Jack Dunfee and his younger brother Clive were 'Bentley Boys', racing works cars at Le Mans and Brooklands. A debonair, good-looking pair, they were part of the wealthy London set. Clive had won the 1931 Brooklands 500, and in 1932 he was going for a second victory with Jack as co-driver. Woolf Barnato had entered them in the car later known as 'Old Number One', the Speed Six that had twice won Le Mans and was by then rebuilt as a fishtailed Brooklands racer with 8-litre engine.

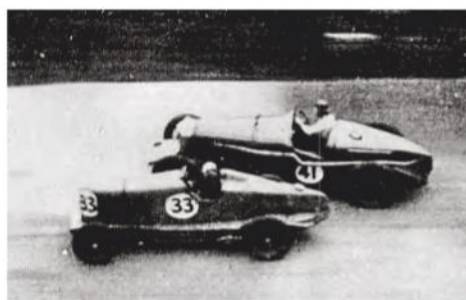
The 500 Miles was billed as the fastest race in the world, and Jack Dunfee had been lapping at 126mph when he came in to hand over to Clive who, strangely, shook his brother's hand before leaping aboard. Keeping up Jack's average, he came up to lap John Cobb's Talbot. As he swerved high up the banked track to pass Cobb, the Bentley's right front wheel went over the lip of the banking. The big car leapt over the edge and cartwheeled into destruction among the trees. Dunfee was thrown out on to the track and died instantly.

Soon there were whispers that Cobb had turned into him, but meanwhile that young lad in the spectator enclosure developed his film. He was astonished to find that one of his pictures clearly showed Cobb driving straight ahead and Dunfee, wrestling with the big Bentley's wheel over the bumps, lurching towards the edge. He sent the photograph to 'Sammy' Davis, the sports editor of *The Autocar* and himself a Le Mans winner. Davis published it, and Cobb was proven innocent.

Three decades later another dramatic photo touched me personally. I was the youthful editor of *Autosport* and we were putting to press

'In great pain, Redman was shouting "The steering broke", but John Cooper was having none of that'

From top: Dunfee's Bentley swerves to avoid Cobb; the front-right wishbone of Redman's Cooper at the split second it breaks in half



our report of the 1968 Belgian Grand Prix at Spa. Arriving at the high-speed left-hander at Les Combes at 170mph, Brian Redman's Cooper-BRM had flown off the road, leaped the barriers and ended up completely destroyed and in flames against a parked car. The marshal aiming the extinguisher as Redman was dragged from the burning wreckage was smoking a cigarette. Still conscious and in great pain, the badly injured Redman was shouting "The steering broke", but team boss John Cooper would have none of that, and told journalists it was driver error. Already making his name in sports cars, Redman was having only his third Grand Prix, and this was going to do his reputation no good.

But back at base a few hours later, our equally youthful snapper, Peter Burn, called me excitedly into the cupboard that did duty as his darkroom. Shooting with a long lens further down the track from Les Combes, he had happened to press the shutter just as, in the distance, Redman came into view.

The car's image was tiny in the frame, but we slid the enlarger up its pole as far as it would go and put the photo paper on the floor. Our print showed clearly that, just as Redman hit the brakes for the corner, the front-right wishbone was snapping in half. We published it, and Redman wrote many years later: 'Thank you, Peter Burn, for saving my career.'



PETER BURN/GETTY

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Martin BUCKLEY

Our recent British V8s test (July) got me thinking about the failed attempts to give British saloons of the '60s eight-pot power. No true barge was not improved by a V8, but only Rover had the momentum to get the job done with the P5B. There was half a plan to 'Roverise' the Austin 3 Litre with a Buick engine as a possible P5B replacement; it apparently made a lovely car, used for some time on the road by Leyland's Harry Webster.

Rootes got surprisingly close to the V8 flagship dream with its Chrysler-powered Super Snipe/Imperial in the mid-'60s. There was even a 133mph Humber Sceptre prototype with a Barracuda engine, but the bigger cars were deemed to be the most suitable home despite production-line issues – the V8 would only go in from above – plus the 125mph prototype wore out a set of front tyres after just a handful of laps of MIRA's bowl. Six (or up to a dozen) prototypes were built, a production line set up, badges designed and even a brochure printed, but Chrysler cancelled the idea at the 11th hour. Reginald Rootes ran a prototype for a few years and a handful of cars still exist, but the big Humpers proved resistant to change.

Ford went V6 rather than V8 with its mid-'60s MkIV Zephyr/Zodiac 'flying pig' range, but that car's problem was handling rather than a lack of urge. Sir John Whitmore – noted campaigner of the Lotus Cortina and Mini Cooper in saloon racing – ran a modified Zephyr on the road, with a Cobra V8 under its aircraft-carrier-sized bonnet. That was one pig that really did fly.

I remember him saying that just before Ford launched the MkIV in April 1966, he was given a prototype to test. He drove it across the West Country in the dead of night so nobody could photograph it, and was appalled by the handling. He said: "It lurched and wallowed, and if you went over a humpback bridge quickly the rear suspension folded up beneath you. It broke away early, a bit like a VW Beetle."

Whitmore was a Ford dealer when the MkIV came out and wasn't surprised when the cars proved difficult to sell. "We had them standing in fields, rotting," he said. "People didn't like the size, and they were ugly." Along with Alan Mann, who owned the Ford GT40s he raced, Whitmore decided to sort the handling of the car: "It only took a week and would have cost Ford nothing to put into production, but they

'There was a Vauxhall PC Cresta with a 7-litre Oldsmobile Toronado front-drive lump. It was ugly and fairly lethal'

rejected it. It was also a political thing; Ford didn't want an outside engineer showing it up."

I must be slightly perverse, but I loved the Zodiac MkIV Farnham Estate I ran a few years ago. You wouldn't have wanted it to be any faster, and the handling kept you on your toes, although this was mainly because the tyres were ancient and rock-hard. It became almost boring when I treated it to a new set of rubber.

There was also a PC Cresta with a 7-litre Oldsmobile Toronado front-drive lump that I only recently heard about. It could never have been an earnest consideration – it was ugly and fairly lethal – and, like the various plans to fit the 4.5-litre Daimler Majestic Major engine in the MkX Jaguar, it sank without trace.

It was a minor tragedy the Edward Turner V8 never found a home anywhere else, because in many respects it was nicer than the US engines it sought to emulate. I've always thought it would be lovely in something such as a Bristol 405 or 406, given the number of those floating about engineless, having donated their 'sixes' to keep something more exciting on the road.

The Majestic Major motor appears to have first been tried in a Jag MkIX as a spare-time project by Norman Dewis. Years ago, I rang Jaguar's former chief test driver to ask about the car, but must have caught him on a difficult day; after barking "I can't bloody remember!", he slammed the phone down on me.

Below, from top: Zodiac was a handful even without a V8; Chrysler V8-powered Humber Imperial built for Lord Rootes, in the Isle of Man Motor Museum



ISLE OF MAN MOTOR MUSEUM



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Porsche 356 Tyres

Porsche Carrera 356 (1950-'55) - 500/525X16 Stella Bianca
Porsche 356 A (1955-'59) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67
Porsche 356 B (1960-'63) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67
Porsche 356 C (1964-'65) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67

Porsche 912 Tyres

Porsche 912 (1965-'68) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67 or 165VR15 Michelin XAS
Porsche 912 (1968-'76) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 165VR15 Michelin XAS

Porsche 911 Tyres

Porsche 901 (1964) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67
Porsche 911S (1965-'68) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67 or 165VR15 Michelin XAS
Porsche 911T (1968-'71) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 165VR15 Michelin XAS or 185HR14 Michelin MXV-P
Porsche 911L (1968) - 165HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 165VR15 Michelin XAS
Porsche 911E (1969) - 185HR14 Michelin MXV-P
Porsche 911S (1969-'75) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 185/70VR15 Michelin XWX
Porsche 911E (1970-'73) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 185/70VR15 Michelin XWX
Porsche 911T (1972-'73) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 185/70VR15 Michelin XWX
Porsche 911 Carrera RS 2.7 (1973) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 front. 215/60WR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 Rear
Porsche 911 2.7 (1974-'77) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 185/70VR15 Michelin XWX
Porsche 911 Carrera (1974-'75) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 front. 215/60WR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 Rear
Porsche 911 Carrera (1976-'77) - 205/50YR15 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 225/50YR15 Pirelli Cinturato P7

Porsche 914 Tyres

Porsche 914 (1970-'73) - 155HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CA67 or 155HR15 Michelin XAS
Porsche 914 (1974-'76) - 155HR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 or 155HR15 Michelin XAS

Porsche 930 Tyres

Porsche 930 Turbo Carrera (1975-'77) - 205/50YR15 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 225/50YR15 Pirelli Cinturato P7
Porsche 930 Turbo (1975-'77) - 205/50YR15 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 225/50YR15 Pirelli Cinturato P7
Porsche 930 Turbo (1978-'85) - 205/55YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 225/50YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7
Porsche 930 Turbo (1985-'89) - 205/55YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 245/45YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7

Porsche 911SC Tyres

Porsche 911 SC (1978-'83) - 185/70VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36 & 215/60VR15 Pirelli Cinturato CN36. Optional 205/55YR16 Pirelli P7 N4 & 225/50YR16 Pirelli P7 N4
Porsche 911 Carrera (1984-'89) - 205/55YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 225/50YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7
Porsche 911 Carrera Super Sport (1985-'89) - 205/55YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7 & 245/45YR16 Pirelli Cinturato P7

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Letter of the month



Marina snapped at Special Tuning Day and, below right, John's 944 racer

LEARNING TO LOVE THE TRACK

I wonder if any readers recall, or attended, the British Leyland Special Tuning Day at Mallory Park in June 1972. The idea was to showcase the Special Tuning performance upgrades, as well as some more interesting cars in the BL range.

I was employed at Longbridge at the time, and word was out that additional drivers would be needed for the event. I was lucky enough to be invited to Abingdon for an orientation and driving evaluation,

under the watchful eye of Harry Shillabeer, then head of the BMC Advanced Driving School and former chief instructor at the Hendon police driving school. After a long drive in and around Abingdon in a Triumph saloon, with instructions to drive quickly and safely, our evaluation scores determined which of the Special Tuning vehicles we were to drive. As one of the top scorers I was allocated a Marina GT, with what was described as a Stage 3 B-series

engine. We used the short circuit, cutting out the Mallory hairpin, and members of the public signed up for three laps in the passenger seat.

We were asked to describe and demonstrate the abilities of the modified cars, but most of us were simply going as fast as we dared. One poor fellow was in disgrace for destroying the engine in a 1.3-litre Marina. Despite all the negative press for the Marina, I was quite impressed with its performance and it was a delight to drift through the corner leading to the pit straight. It may also have had some suspension upgrades. There were a few non-Special Tuning cars, too, all driven by factory staff – I remember the Rover 3500S being particularly quick.

I subsequently took to the circuits racing a Mallock, and still do track days today – at the age of 79 – in a Porsche 944 racing car.

John Dickinson
Okanagan Falls, BC, Canada



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Boxing cleverly

Thanks for Charlie Calderwood's definitive article on my favourite car, the Ferrari Berlinetta Boxer (May). Articles on the Boxer are infrequent compared to those regarding the Lamborghini Countach, for which – as Charlie postulates – the Boxer was never a true competitor; we would have to wait for the Testarossa for that.

As Charlie eruditely states, the

Ferrari was the preferred choice of the less ostentatious driver, which probably explains why it has had to live somewhat in the shadow of the Lamborghini – no hardship in my view. I believe the Boxer to be the better design composition that, together with the 365GTB/4 and the 308GTB, places Leonardo Fioravanti at the forefront of the great automotive designers, along with Gandini and Giugiaro.

It would appear that some of your story's technical information has been transposed. I sincerely doubt that the 512BB was £10k cheaper than its predecessor! I am also led to believe that the maximum speed of 188mph for the 365GT4 BB is contentious, as I understand that it was accomplished by an early prototype and not then duplicated by

the finished production model.

I recall *Autocar* testing a Boxer in the late '70s – by John Miles, no less – and 'only' being able to reach a top speed of 162mph. This fact nevertheless does nothing to diminish the Ferrari in my eyes – it appears to be doing 200mph just standing still – such is its purity of form and balanced execution.

Bryan Caldwell
Vancouver, BC, Canada

Rose-tinted specs

I found great humour in the rant suggesting that the Monarch and Granada were great cars (*Letters*, May): their greatest appeal was to silver-haired pensioners. A friend of mine had one, a gutless wonder with bad gas mileage that took corners like a '58 Lincoln.

One letter talked about grease nipples; Ford in the '70s had sealed front ends, so if they were not

properly done at the factory the front end would collapse – as it did with my brother's car.

It's hard to defend American or English vehicles from that time period. As a Chrysler person, I had to talk my father out of buying a Plymouth Volare because it also was junk. No wonder the roads today are packed with cars from Asia: they were produced to gain market share, while other nations only tried to squeeze out every penny to fill their pockets.

Ken Demerling
Toronto, Canada



Pedant of the month



Pedant of the month wins a C&S baseball cap. Send your observations to alastair.clements@haymarket.com

Andrew Forsyth's letter (May) claimed the Mount Panorama track at Bathurst is 'normally closed except for the bottom straight'. In fact, the whole circuit is open daily, except when there is an event on, and anyone can drive the entire lap as often as they like. Even more pedantically, I can

correct his note that the speed limit is 40mph. Australia changed to metric many years ago and the limit is 60kph, so anyone driving at 40mph, which is over 64kph, could well get nabbed by the traffic cops that park under the trees at the side

of Conrod Straight, waiting for just such a mug. It is, however, worth the trip as Andrew says, if only to discover how steep a climb it is, both up and down.

Chris Martin

Comments & clarifications

As a TVR fan, to see 4.3 secs 0-60mph and 143mph top speed for the Cerbera 4.5 (July) is ludicrous! Sub-4 secs and 180-190mph+ is the truth.

Scott Burnett

Apologies, the top speed was an error – it should read '185mph+'. The 0-60mph was a genuine figure from Autocar's road test; we try to use independently verified figures if we can... Ed

You mention seeing a 'glorious 1968 Studebaker Avanti' at Rétromobile (April). While it's true it was a '68 Avanti, it can't have been a Studebaker: the firm stopped building Avantis in '63, with Studebaker ending production of cars of all types three years later. The Avanti continued with the Avanti Car Company, via two dealers who bought the rights and tooling.

Ryan Keogh

One for the road

Congratulations on lauding road rallying as an affordable, intriguing form of motorsport (March). I paid for occasional club racing in the '60s by sourcing, fettling and then selling a variety of cars, including a Mini Cooper, E-type and Lotus 23B, but eventually realised I did not have the funds to compete seriously. Attending the final meet at Crystal Palace, I discovered the then-embryonic Historic Sports Car Club and thought historic racing offered an opportunity. After sourcing a Lotus Eleven in the wilds of Burnley, I enjoyed the occasional sortie during the '70s, even gaining a second place in a race at Ingliston – and receiving 'appearance' money!

Two children at university in London sadly led to the parting of the ways, but all was not lost. My thoughts turned to rallying and I'd always fancied a TR5, so I joined the Historic Rally Car Register. I found an eligible 1967 TR5 – the cut-off then being December '67 – and weighed up 'stage' or 'road'. The latter seemed to offer more bang for my buck and, as you point out, the tests off-road gave a taste of the former. You also hit the spot with the importance of navigators. It is really their sport: you can be a great driver, but if you are 'wrong-slotted' you're dead in the water.



With Ian Chew in the hot seat, we enjoyed reasonable success in many superbly organised events (above), winning the Association of North-Western Car Clubs title in 1993. The real attraction for me was the variety – regularities, navigational challenges, night sections, and a real taste of stage rallying with the tests in forests and at Army training grounds.

Sadly, while looking forward to our third Three Castles in 2011, I suddenly lost the sight in one eye. *Nil desperandum*: always believing we are immensely privileged to enjoy our sport, and should never forget those less fortunate, I now organise two road rallies a year in Wales that have raised £88k for good causes. Like you, I thoroughly recommend road rallying.

Tony Rogers

Welshpool, Powys



Gentleman racer

Further to Brent Fowler's letter in the June issue, the D-type (above) was indeed owned by colourful privateer the Hon Richard Wrottesley. He fitted in his racing between studying in Cambridge, serving in the Parachute Regiment and winter sports in St Moritz. He started competing in XKD606 aged 20, before changing to the ex-Jim Clark Lister-Jaguar 'Flat Iron' later in 1962. (Presumably the same one timed on the M1. Later his Bentley Continental was found inverted at the bottom of the Cresta Run after another escapade.)

For the 1965 season, he teamed up with fellow former para Innes Ireland in the turquoise Anglian Racing Development Elva-BMWs, including an outing at Le Mans with Tony Lanfranchi. When he retired from racing, Wrottesley moved to the west of Ireland to farm pigs. Sadly, he was killed in November 1970 after his E-type hit a bridge in County Galway when returning from Dublin after a long day on the hunting field.

While we might not see his like again in a racing car, the family thrill-seeking continued with his son, Lord Clifton Wrottesley, who represented Ireland in the skeleton (supine toboggan) at the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Brendan McCoy

Dublin, Ireland

Missed opportunity

I was delighted to see the article on the prototype AC MA 200 (May). I thought it was, as Yogi Berra would have said, 'déjà vu all over again', but after a little research, I was mostly wrong in my assumption that I had seen this car before.

In 1964, I assembled a 1:24-scale plastic model of the then-futuristic

Cougar II dream car (below). This was a sharp, fastback two-seater, built on an AC Cobra chassis and powered by a 260cu in Ford V8, and it left a lasting impression on this 13-year-old gearhead. The Cougar II was never intended for production, but it could have been a viable competitor for the then-new Corvette Sting Ray.



Your article doesn't attribute the design of MA 200 to a particular person, but the Cougar II was allegedly penned by Ford's head of styling, Eugene Bordinat. To my eyes, the Cougar II and MA 200 could have received input from the genius of Pietro Frua, since both imitate the grille-below-the-bumper frontal appearance of the Maserati Mistral, and all three appeared at about the same time. The Mistral was the last car to get Giulio Alfieri's long-stroke straight-six, and the Cougar morphed into a Mustang-inspired pony car.

Despite its huge reputation, in large part due to a large number of reproductions, the Cobra was not very successful commercially. Ironically, AC replaced the Cobra with the Frua-designed 428 coupé and convertible. In retrospect, it is unfortunate the Hurlock brothers didn't consider reviving MA 200. It is a beautiful car, and might have kept the AC firm afloat as they tried to engineer the 3000ME into a production-ready sports car.

Galen Poole

Brandon, Mississippi, USA



Trevor's tearaway

It was lovely to see the article on the TVR Grantura in the May edition. I used to own a slightly earlier Grantura, a 1959 car. Mine was originally similarly Climax-engined, but by the time I owned it during the 1970s (above) that had long gone, replaced by a Triumph 1300 that suited the car but wasn't really very special. I was reunited with the car in 2017, by then with an MGB engine and a significant change of colour to red.

But here's my little complaint. Unless I am mistaken, the trailing-arm Volkswagen suspension front and rear surely gives the car a roll-centre height of ground level, and not the high roll centre you mention. And it is this low roll centre that dictates the stiff suspension, due to the longer moment arm in roll from the centre of gravity to the ground.

Chris Dowlen
Via email



Racing politics

Mark Thatcher was a participant in the Formula Talbot event in 1980 at Brands Hatch, celebrating Stirling Moss' 50th birthday (*Top ten*, May). After his misadventures in the Sahara in his attempt at the Paris-Dakar, the joke doing the rounds was: "Good news and bad news. You have won a holiday to Tahiti, but Mark Thatcher is driving you to the airport."

The photograph above is of me during that event, sitting in what I thought was Moss' Mille Miglia-winning Mercedes-Benz 300SLR. It turned out it was the back-up car, which never raced, and of course the real '722' had a second headrest for good old 'Jenks'.

Ian Dove
Via email

Connaught tales

I found the story on Frank Lugg and his Connaught and Lotus Elite (*Lost & found*, June) interesting. I never knew Lugg, although I did know where he lived in Great Baddow, and have known of him for more than 50 years.

It would have been in 1969 or maybe 1970 when I first saw the Connaught L2 on his driveway, and regularly spied it on the local roads for a period of time. Clearly it was in very nice condition, so presumably he had rebuilt it by that time following his 1965 purchase. Some time after I first saw it on his drive, I spotted a 'wanted' advert in an old issue of



Motor Sport magazine from c1967 that read something like: 'Would the owner of the Connaught L-series registration MPH 996 please get in touch with me.'

The Lotus Elite may have even predated the Connaught in his ownership. Certainly I'm sure he had it in the late '60s and used it a lot – I'd like to say it was his daily driver, but I don't know that for sure. He was still driving it regularly in the late 1970s and possibly into the '80's. One of the last times I can remember seeing it was in the late '70s, while I was driving in the north-west of Essex near Saffron Walden, some 30 miles from where he lived. Lugg was standing by it talking to another person – I noticed it because by that time Elites had generally disappeared from the roads.

I spoke to him only once, which would have been the summer of 1971 when I was still at school and had a Saturday job as a petrol-pump attendant. Previously I had seen the Connaught pass by the garage several times, but one day it came in. I rushed over to serve him, telling Lugg it was the only Connaught I had ever seen. He seemed genuinely surprised that I knew what it was and proceeded to go into great detail about its Lea-Francis underpinnings, and was very enthusiastic about it.

Trevor Pyman
Via email



IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE*

SCALDED CATS

How John Coombs gave Jaguars a boost on both road and track



PLUS Discovering why Fiat's Balilla is the hot ticket for historic rallying

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1955 Ferrari 250 Europa Ex-Gendebien



1929 WO Bentley 4.5 VdP



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As the seminal Lotus supercar celebrates its 50th anniversary, the creative minds behind its birth reunite at Hethel, its spiritual home

WORDS **SIMON HUCKNALL** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**





Clockwise from main:
drama from any angle;
tiny door mirror; proud
boast; borrowed Fiat
tail-lights blend in well;
name suggests agility



Fabulous tartan
trim only features
on the early cars,
but the basic cabin
architecture was
carried through

“Design is not a democracy.” Such a bold statement, wonderfully out of tune with modern group-think, could only apply to a car as radical as the Lotus Esprit. These words were only uttered today by Giorgetto Giugiaro, the man responsible for the look of Hethel’s mid-’70s Ferrari challenger that, 50 years ago, stunned Paris Salon showgoers at its production reveal. It was a genuine breakthrough model for Colin Chapman’s maverick company and, well north of 10,000 sales and a remarkable 28-year lifespan later, no other competitor has been able to match its enduring appeal – other than a certain rear-engined German contender.

To tell the Esprit’s story, not only do we have with us four landmark models that chart its evolution, but also the designers responsible for each of them – including *Signor* Giugiaro, arguably the world’s most influential practitioner of his craft. First, though, to set the scene and to provide some historical narrative, we are joined at Ketteringham Hall – the stately pile near Hethel where much of the Esprit’s design and modelling work was done – by Mike Kimberley. This former chief executive of Group Lotus worked closely with Chapman and Giugiaro more than half a century ago to bring the Esprit project to fruition.

It all started, Mike tells us, in 1972 when he and Chapman visited the Geneva Salon. They were introduced to Giugiaro, who expressed an interest in creating a show car for Lotus, which, given the designer’s back catalogue (Alfa Romeo Giulia GT, BMW 3200 CS and Maserati Ghibli, to name but a few), Chapman saw as “a great opportunity”. However, after a small model was created by Giugiaro’s ItalDesign following the show, Chapman had second thoughts about the entire project. But it failed to deter the Italian, whose response was: “We’re going to build it anyway!”

What emerged on ItalDesign’s stand at the Turin Salon that November was the ‘Silver Car’ concept, which already bore an uncanny resemblance to the production car into which it would eventually morph. “I flew down with Colin and [designer] Oliver Winterbottom for the show,” recalls Mike. “The car looked absolutely stunning. There were crowds five-deep at the stand. Colin was so pleased.”





Giugiaro, now 87, has mellowed his views on the final production Esprit



GIORGETTO GIUGIARO

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Stylist, Fiat (1955-'59)
- Stylist, Gruppo Bertone (1959-'65)
- Stylist, Ghia (1965-'67)
- Founder, ItalDesign Giugiaro (1968-2015)
- Founder, GFG Style (2016-date)
- Car Designer of the Year, 1999
- Inductee, Automotive Hall of Fame, 2002
- Compasso d'Oro industrial design award (multiple)
- Contributed to the creation of 250 cars

"With this creative process, you are trying to do something different – it is an exercise in changing what the shapes were at the time"

He was pleased enough to see that Giugiaro's show car could become the replacement for the Lotus Europa Twin Cam. "Colin said 'let's do it'," continues Mike, "so when I got back I stretched the Europa Twin Cam's chassis and plonked one of the [Type] 907 engine blocks and heads in it to send to Italy." Not only was it vital that Lotus' four-valve-per-cylinder, all-aluminium engine powered the new car, but that the company's then-new composites technology was adopted in its construction.

"The body was made in two halves," says Mike. "When you 'shoot' the bottom half with the top half, it encapsulates the composite so that it runs in the direction you want it to for maximum strength. You could stand it on its roof... You could punch it on the side at 30 miles an hour, on the rear at 30 miles an hour."

Over the following three years, Mike, Chapman and Winterbottom often travelled

thrice-weekly via 'Lotus Airways' (Chapman's own aircraft) from Hethel to the ItalDesign studio in Turin. "The relationship with Colin and Giorgetto was extremely good... they respected one another and got on extremely well," Mike remembers. Thanks to Chapman's famed obsession with light weight (the production Esprit S1 weighed just 898kg) and the exceptional efficiency of the Type 907 engine, it easily met California's ultra-tough clean-air regulations – crucial, with a third of Esprit production destined for North America. However, productionising Giugiaro's origami-style body, with its acute wedge design, presented its fair share of challenges.

"We were looking at the show car in the [ItalDesign] studio and the A-post was at 18°," which, explains Mike, would have caused a parallax effect found at angles below 22°. "So [Chapman and Giugiaro] took off their jackets

and, with a large bastard file, filed away at the plaster of Paris – there was white dust everywhere! Colin wanted to go further, but he couldn't because they'd hit the steel frame it was built on. But we managed to keep it at 22° with a completely flat 'screen."

Sitting with Giorgetto alongside Jonathan Hackford's wonderfully original Esprit S1 is perhaps partly reminiscent of when the first Esprit production car met its designer half a century ago at the 1975 Paris Salon. I ask about his inspiration for the Esprit: "With this creative process, you are trying to do something different – it is an exercise in proportions, and changing and respecting what the shapes were at the time. It is not an inspiration from something specific... We design instinctively; we start designing when we have stimuli."

Nonetheless, those stimuli tested some when it came to building the first prototype, which



Fabulously extreme wedge profile. Left: former CEO Mike Kimberley was a key part of the Esprit team



PETER STEVENS

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Royal College of Art, London (1963)
- Founder, Peter Stevens Design (1976)
- Chief designer, Lotus Cars (1985)
- Designer, Jaguar XJR-15 (1989)
- British Design Council Award (Elan, 1991)
- Chief designer, McLaren F1 (1991-'93)
- Consultant designer, BMW LM99 & Toyota Le Mans GT (1998)
- Design director, MG Rover Group (2000)
- Autocar Designer of the Year (2002)
- Director of design, Rivian (2011-'12)

Peter Stevens' masterful Esprit rework joins an incredible design back catalogue

"The Esprit was becoming more mainstream, rather than a part-finished kit car, which then became a totally finished kit car"

was revealed at the Geneva show in 1973. As Giorgetto laments: "Creativity itself is not difficult, but creativity applied to production – that is what is difficult. For the original prototype, we tried to do our best from a static point of view, but there is a list of items that you cannot influence. For example, tail-lamps: they are really costly, so you have to go with something that is already productionised." If he did have frustrations about cost-compromised elements of the Esprit's final incarnation – in a November 2001 C&SC interview, he said "I'd rather not have had my name on it at all" – they appear to have softened over the years.

Even if Giorgetto has never driven an Esprit himself (he owns two, in one of which his son drove him to our interview today), I'm keen to experience this S1 first-hand. Jonathan bought the car as a barn-find 11 years ago, since when it has undergone a nut-and-bolt restoration, returning it to its original 1977 specification.

It really does look as if it has just driven off Giorgetto's drawing board, so clean and daringly rakish are its lines. Riding on its 14in Wolfrace alloys, you notice how perfect its proportions are; even the doorhandles and lights that were 'borrowed' from elsewhere are neatly integrated. Mike told me earlier that the show car's tartan interior and orange carpets "knocked their socks off" at the Turin Salon, and while only the early Esprits, such as this one, retained this trim (the tartan was prone to fading), you can see why. It gives the cabin a uniquely *avant-garde* 1970s ambience, especially when applied to the wedge-like forms that proliferate throughout.

To drive, the Esprit conforms to Lotus type. You're perched the Esprit and reclined in the driver's seat, facing the broad instrument pod that became an Esprit trademark. Other than the closely spaced pedals, offset to the left, the driving position is superb, with good vision

(other than to the rear) and a clear view of the instruments through the rather plain steering wheel. Select first with the wooden-ball-topped gearlever and the Citroën-sourced 'box is nifty and precise, mated to an equally light clutch. Performance is peppy – but far from muscular – from the 160bhp, 16-valve 'four', and there's an engaging warble from the twin Dell'Ortos as you accelerate through the gears.

On the Hethel test track, the S1 Esprit is as sprightly as its name implies, responding with precision through the unassisted steering rack at every turn, and displaying such fine balance and stability that you forget that the motor is slung amidships (albeit longitudinally, for better weight distribution). The S1 might have been a touch underpowered compared to its rivals, but when you consider that a Ferrari 308 weighed an extra 200kg, the Lotus only needed a minor power lift to bring its performance on to a level par with the Italian.



Left-right: turbocharging gave the chassis the urge it deserved; SE brings luxury but feels dated; discreet aero kit – a 'High Wing' was also offered



LOTUS ESPRIT S1

Sold/number built 1976-'77/718

Construction steel backbone

chassis, glassfibre body

Engine Type 907 all-alloy, dohc, 16v 1973cc 'four', twin Dell'Orto carburettors

Max power 160bhp @ 6200rpm

Max torque 140lb ft @ 4900rpm

Transmission Citroën five-speed manual, RWD

Suspension independent, at front by unequal-length wishbones, anti-roll bar rear trailing arms, lateral link, fixed-length driveshafts; coil springs, telescopic dampers f/r

Steering rack and pinion

Brakes discs, inboard at rear, with servo

Length 13ft 9in (4191mm)

Width 6ft 1½in (1867mm)

Height 3ft 7½in (1105mm)

Wheelbase 8ft (2438mm)

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0-60mph 8.6 secs

Top speed 124mph **Mpg** 26

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Price now £25-65,000



LOTUS ESPRIT SE

Where different from S1

Sold/number built 1989-'93/1608

Engine Type 910, 2174cc, Garrett T3 turbocharger, chargecooler and multi-point fuel injection

Max power 264bhp @ 6500rpm

Max torque 261lb ft @ 3900rpm

Transmission Renault five-speed manual, RWD

Suspension independent, at front by double wishbones rear upper and lower transverse links, radius arms; anti-roll bar f/r

Brakes discs, with servo

Weight 2929lb (1328kg)

0-60mph 4.7 secs

Top speed 165mph **Mpg** 29

Price new £42,500 (1989)

Price now £20-40,000



LOTUS ESPRIT S4S

Where different from SE

Sold/number built 1995-'96/367

Engine Garrett T3/60 turbocharger

Max power 300bhp @ 7000rpm

Max torque 290lb ft @ 3600rpm

Steering power-assisted rack and pinion

Brakes discs, with servo and anti-lock

Length 14ft 5¾in (4718mm)

Width 6ft 2in (1867mm)

Height 3ft 9¼in (1149mm)

Weight 2966lb (1347kg)

0-60mph 4.6 secs

Top speed 168mph **Mpg** 25

Price new £52,995 (1995)

Price now £35-50,000



LOTUS ESPRIT V8

Where different from S4S

Sold/number built 1996-

2004/1483 (all V8s)

Engine dohc-per-bank, 32v 3506cc V8, twin Garrett T25 turbochargers

Max power 350bhp @ 6500rpm

Max torque 295lb ft @ 4250rpm

Weight 3040lb (1380kg)

0-60mph 4.8 secs

Top speed 175mph **Mpg** 21

Price new £49,950 (1999)

Price now £40-65,000



Four-pot S4S and V8 are closely matched on the circuit. Top: S1 to X180 marked the biggest step-change in Esprit design



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Thomson's smoother S4S adds muscle inspired by the limited-run Sport 300

JULIAN THOMSON

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- RCA, London (1982)
- Designer, Ford (1984)
- Designer, Lotus (1986)
- Head of design, Lotus
- Chief of exteriors, VW Design (1998)
- Various roles, ending as design director, Jaguar Land Rover (2000)
- Design director, General Motors Advanced Design Europe (2022)



"We did mess around with those wings a lot, and the wings had to work. The cooling at the front of the car was also critical"

Which is exactly what happened. Following the revised S2 model in 1978, the Type 912 2.2-litre arrived in 1980, alongside the 210bhp Type 82 Turbo Esprit. The Type 85 Esprit S3 followed in 1981, which was to be the last of the Giugiaro-designed derivatives – although Giugiaro did propose a V8-powered Esprit replacement, codenamed Etna, which sadly never came to fruition.

The Esprit's next design milestone arrived in the shape of the X180, designed by Peter Stevens. I'm joined by Peter alongside Stuart Mills' pristine 1990 Turbo SE, which he bought less than a year ago. Peter describes the S1 as "a show car for the road" and "brilliantly clever" as a flag-bearer for the Esprit. "But," he notes, "I had to make the aerodynamics much better. I was told that the drag coefficient was 0.33, but I took one to the wind tunnel and it was 0.44Cd – which was dreadful. To get the X180 down to 0.33Cd was extremely hard work, while making it stable as well." Peter points to the smoothed-over C-pillar/rear buttress, where originally there had been a sharp edge, as one example of his aero tweaks. "The Esprit was becoming more mainstream," he continues, "rather than what you might call a part-finished kit car, which then became a totally finished kit car. I remember Chapman saying: 'The customers will do the final development for us.'" Peter found ways of giving the car a more grown-up appearance: "There was that black rubbing strip, which didn't fit very well, so I invented a way of getting rid of that horrible bit of black plastic."

There's no doubting that Peter's redesign gave the Esprit a fresh lease of life after the S1,

which – in detail, at least – was so much a child of the '70s. While the X180 retained the essence of Giorgetto's original wedge profile, it looks more cohesive, smoother-edged and, yes, more mainstream. Drive Stuart's 264bhp SE on the test track and the car also makes more sense dynamically, simply because the backbone chassis was always capable of harnessing so much more power. Peter's aerodynamic revisions clearly came into their own on a car that, in this guise, had a maximum speed of 163mph. But Mike's demand for transverse links and radius arms for the rear suspension, to replace the earlier cars' trailing-arm set-up, also makes it feel more surefooted at high speed. With no power assistance, the SE's steering is heavy at lower speeds. The (now Renault-sourced) five-speed gearbox also has a weighty, rubbery shift that demands a firm hand, and is mated to an equally heavy clutch.

As your pace climbs, these foibles are quickly

forgotten. There's some old-school turbo lag (though not as much as I had expected), but the 2.2-litre 'four' is an aural joy, with a seriously infectious exhaust note. You now begin to appreciate just how damned good the Esprit's chassis is – even nearly 40 years on: superbly balanced, with minimal body movement and ample reserves of grip, even as you push the car's natural envelope.

It would be another six years before Julian Thomson led the Esprit's next design evolution. He had joined Lotus from Ford just prior to the X180's launch and was initially responsible for the design of that model's road wheel, as well as the front and rear spoilers on the SE. But in 1992, Julian was tasked with facelifting the Esprit "to get more life out of it". And he did just that, with the S4 generation soldiering on until 2001. "For me and Russell [Carr], we built a car," recounts Julian. "We did the front bumpers, the rockers, the road wheel – it was meant to be



Left-right: S4S feels roomier and adds powered steering at last; Toyota Corolla GT86 tail-lights shared with X180



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Current design boss Carr added quad-light rear and centre-exit exhausts to tie in with contemporary Elises

RUSSELL CARR

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Transport Design, Coventry (1988)
- Designer, MGA Developments
- Designer, Lotus Cars (1990)
- Design director, Lotus Cars (1998)



"We look back fondly now, but for a period that flat wedge design was out of vogue. We tried to make the Esprit softer and more fluid"

a shopping list, because we thought 'they won't be able to afford everything'. In the event, they liked the car so much they decided to do it all." The only regulatory changes involved fitting a "pretty awful" airbag steering wheel, but, as the Esprit gained ever-higher outputs – as much as 300bhp now for the Sport 300 and S4S – there was more aero work. "We did mess around with those wings a lot," Julian says, "and the wings did have to work. The cooling at the front of the car was also critical."

The S4S we're standing next to was launched in 1994, and this black example belongs to Dan Andrews, who, like so many owners I've spoken to, caught the Esprit bug early on from its starring film roles with 007 in *The Spy Who Loved Me* and *For Your Eyes Only*. On the one hand, this near-final iteration of the Esprit was smoothed-over to the extent it made its shape slightly generic, and nowhere as cutting-edge as Giugiaro's original. But, for me, it was a small price to pay for the aero benefits bestowed on the car, keeping it viable as a rival to cars such as Porsche's 964 and Ferrari's incoming F355.

'Our' S4S packs 300bhp, and on the test track it leads our group dynamically, hitting a sweet spot in terms of its power-to-weight ratio. Its standard power steering brings a greater sense of agility, with hardly any loss of feedback. The chassis of the S4S also somehow manages to mask that it weighs a few hundred kilos more than the S1, still feeling poised and adroit at speed. However, while its turbo performance is more measured, and in general terms the car feels more refined than the SE, its powertrain perhaps lacks a little of the older car's sparkle.

By 2001, Russell Carr was heading up Hethel's

design department and was asked to make further visual and aerodynamic revisions to make the by then V8-powered Esprit match-fit for its final chapter. "Although we look back fondly now," explains Russell, "there was a period when that very flat-edged wedge design was out of vogue. So we were constantly trying to make the Esprit softer and more fluid. We had to do some work around the front bumper – we needed to get more air in there [to cool the V8], so we were having to pull the openings as much as possible. It also gave the car another presence." At the same time, the V8's previous, Toyota-sourced tail-lights were in short supply, so they were replaced, giving this model its unique, four-light rear panel.

Andrew Laing has owned his Final Edition V8 for 20 years, and has driven from Edinburgh to be with us at Hethel today. On track, it sounds every bit as feisty and aggressive as a 350bhp V8 should – which is a pleasant surprise after

the earlier V8 I drove recently (C&SC, July). The Renault 'box's change is lighter and more fluid, and you find yourself short-shifting through the circuit's twisties, digging into the V8's near-300lb ft of torque. It's brutal in some respects, and yet that familiar, user-friendly, sweetly balanced chassis still lurks beneath this most rumbustious of Esprits. It's an utter joy, and the only car here in which you feel that you could finally breach its chassis' upper limits.

To this day the Lotus remains an undervalued gem, and that's baffling. But Russell sums up its legacy perfectly just before we part: "Through all of these Esprits, there's still the thread of the original car: very planar surfaces, very raked 'screen, wedge shape. There are others, but the Esprit has a simplicity and purity. It's got great proportions, and it drives fantastically."

Thanks to Alastair Florance at Lotus (lotuscars.com); AnneMarie Brien at Club Lotus (clublotus.co.uk)



Left-right: cabin feels – and is – the most modern here; huge power boost from the V8 is a match for the chassis





Vintage Tours' route takes in a variety of great driving roads and (left) quaint local villages



THE GREAT ESCAPE

An MGA meets the equally beautiful landscape of northern Portugal for a twisting, historic and sunny road trip that too few have yet discovered

WORDS **CHARLIE CALDERWOOD** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**



Ponte de Lima's eponymous Roman bridge.
Above: simple interior stays bright with colour



Mosteiro de Santa Maria de Refóios do Lima.
Above: the old streets of Ponte de Lima



It's not that hard a sell, road-tripping in northern Portugal. It's not like going to the pub and telling your mates you're doing a driving holiday of Bulgaria – which, while beautiful and under-explored, does take a bit of explaining as a holiday destination. The point that my guides – Valeska and Matthias Haux, the founders of Vintage Tours – are making, after 20 years of living in the region, is that it deserves to be up there with Scotland's North Coast 500, Switzerland's Alpine passes and Italy's Tuscan hills as one of Europe's seminal driving destinations.

That's a bold claim, and one that needs to be tested. A classic Porsche 911 might spring to mind as an appropriate tool for the job, or perhaps a fizzing Alfa Spider. But even my German hosts, themselves owners of a Fiat Dino Spider, say no: what you really need to explore this part of the country is an MGA.

If you picture Abingdon's swoopy, late-'50s roadster in your head, it's probably parked in front of a quaint English pub, set to the gentle soundtrack of distant leather on willow. It's about as Portuguese as Bovril. Of any country outside the Anglosphere, however, MG's second home might just be Portugal.

A reliable 15% of the Portuguese car market went to British marques during the late 1950s and early 1960s, fostered by a centuries-old trading relationship (largely based on wine) and shared ties in the European Free Trade Association. Combine that with a kind climate and a motoring culture that has tended towards keeping things going rather than buying new, and it figures that MGs make up a considerable proportion of Portugal's classic fleet, especially among post-war sports models.

That, alongside the car's inherent talents, is why Vintage Tours chose to buy five of these British roadsters for classic hire in Portugal's Douro Valley. MGAs have a connection to the country beyond contemporary sports cars

from other countries – or even other British marques – and Valeska and Matthias reckon that the now 70-year-old MG is the perfect car in which to explore a destination that deserves to be higher up Europe's must-drive list.

Certainly, it's a strong start at Ponte de Lima, Portugal's oldest chartered town, celebrating its 900th anniversary in 2025. 'Our' Iris Blue MG awaits, pinging in the sunshine, just in front of the ancient Roman bridge that gives the town its name. Valeska and Matthias are keen to



The Romanesque Mosteiro de Bravães is one of few such churches in Portugal, nearly 900 years old



Clockwise from left: typical stonework;
Ponte de Lima's baroque mansions;
peppy MGA is willing on hilly roads



*'You clench the top of the door
with your elbow as you take a corner
with verve, the parping exhaust
note bouncing off the cliffs'*

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Lot 929
1948 Armstrong Siddeley Hurricane



Lot 934 - 1960 Vauxhall Cresta PA



Lot 937
1934 Standard Avon Le Mans Special Tourer



Lot 975 - 1967 Sunbeam Alpine



Lot 930 - 1954 Riley RME 1.5



Lot 902 - 2003 Porsche 911 (996)
Carrera 4 S Convertible



Lot 906 - 1962 Bentley S3



Lot 907 - 1952 Morgan Plus 4



Lot 1008 - 1969 Jaguar 240 Manual with O/D



Lot 911 - 1958 MG A 1500



Lot 923
1937 Brough Superior 4.2 Dual Purpose



Lot 936 - 2001 Porsche 911 (996) Carrera 4
Convertible



Lot 941 - 2002 Porsche 911 Carrera 4S



Lot 945 - 1960 Austin Healey Sprite MK1



Lot 970 - 1972 MG B GT Auto



Lot 963 - 1979 Volkswagen T2 2.0 Devon
Sundowner Camper



Lot 965 - 1989 MG Metro 1275



Lot 922 - 1934 Hudson Terraplane



Lot 991 - 1991 Peugeot 205 GTI 1.6



Lot 961 - 1976 Volkswagen Camper Van

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From top: MGA feels faster than it really is; orange trees are common in the region

show off the local area, so I follow Matthias in his Chariot Red MGA out of the town, past grand mansion houses and rustic terraces.

It's my first go in an MGA but, having spent a lot of time in both T-types and MGBs, there's nothing unfamiliar here. Though externally it may look closer to a B than its separate-winged predecessor, it's actually a TD I'm reminded of as I first get to grips with the controls. The MGA's steering rack is right out of that car (and the YA saloon), and it has exactly the same direct, high-g geared feel, accompanied by a similar weight and absence of isolation from bumps in the road. In few cars does the steering wheel feel so directly attached to the front wheels, for better or worse.

Still, it would be unfair to say the MGA was a new body on the old TF chassis. There were changes, most notably that the outriggers now followed the edges of the body, so the driver sat inside the chassis rather than on top of it – what the Americans were then calling a 'peripheral' frame. A lot was carried over, however, the MGA being developed in an extremely tight timeframe following the British Motoring Corporation's far-too-familiar tradition of putting off redevelopment for years, before rushing a car to market. The suspension was identical to its predecessor's, the independent, coil-sprung front end having been first created for the YA in 1938 by Alec Issigonis.

The gearshift takes you back to those earlier cars, too, a tightly snicking, chromed lever typical of 1950s British cars. There's a knack

here, because the pattern is close and you've got to be careful to move just the tiniest bit left to find second when making a downchange – too far and you hit reverse, to much baulking. Otherwise, it's easy enough to shift through, and it isn't a struggle to keep up with Matthias' red car even after clearing the town limits into the surrounding, grapevine-laden hills.

As if Ponte de Lima itself didn't make it obvious enough, this is an old part of Portugal. It was this relatively small section of the modern country that broke away from the Kingdom of León in the 1100s, creating a separate Portuguese identity, and that history is all around as you drive through its scenic hills. Just outside of nearby Ponte de Barca, you will stumble upon Mosteiro de Bravães, a Romanesque building dating from those founding days of the country, while almost every house on the side of the road appears to have its own medieval grain silo, a *hórreo*, stationed in the garden.

After a quick exploration of the area, I'm back in Ponte de Lima before tomorrow's proper road trip. It's the first of many excellent dinners of Portugal's speciality: some kind of local meat served with fries, shared among the entire table. It's good, simple eating here. (I particularly recommend the rabbit.)

Matthias and Valeska's main attack in their quest of persuasion is a drive up to, and indeed slightly over, the Spanish border, descending back into the Lima valley via Portugal's sole national park, the Peneda-Gerês. The IC28 that



Lindoso's artificial lake on the Spanish border features some extraordinary bridges



From top: later MGA with '1600' badge; US example's mph speedo; blanking plate instead of radio; B-series 'four' gives lusty torque

MGA 1600

Sold/number built 1958-'60/31,501

Construction steel chassis, steel and aluminium panels

Engine all-iron, ohv 1588cc 'four', twin SU carburettors

Max power 80bhp @ 5600rpm

Max torque 87lb ft @ 3800rpm

Transmission four-speed manual, RWD

Suspension: **front** independent, by wishbones, coil springs **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs; lever-arm dampers f/r

Steering rack and pinion

Brakes discs front, drums rear

Length 13ft (3962mm)

Width 4ft 10in (1473mm)

Height 4ft 2in (1270mm)

Wheelbase 7ft 10in (2388mm)

Weight 2044lb (927kg)

0-60mph 13.3 secs

Top speed 96mph **Mpg** 30

Price new £940

Price now £20-40,000



Cerca de Baixo is yet another picturesque village on the route

'An hour ago, the valley had looked like a primordial forest from Jurassic Park, now it's closer to the set of a Spaghetti Western'

takes us towards Spain follows the Lima up into the mountains, villages becoming more scarce the further you go. I'm thankful for this MGA 1600's extra torque over its 1500 predecessor – that, combined with the short gearing, means it doesn't struggle up inclines. The low door line makes this a car that feels far faster than it is, too. Quickly, you get into the habit of clenching the top of the door with your elbow as you take a corner with verve, compensating for the roll, while the characteristically parping B-series exhaust note bounces off the nearby cliffs.

Just before reaching the Spanish border, we pass Castelo de Lindoso overlooking the huge artificial lake formed by the Alto Lindoso dam, which in turn creates some spectacular bridges. It's at this point I hear a metal twang and, as I look back from the car, spot a piece of metal tumbling behind me. Assuming that something's fallen off, I pull over and inspect the part now on the road – it's a hydraulic line, but there's nothing leaking from the MG and everything is working fine. With Matthias having noticed we've dropped back, he stops and confirms that the mystery component is a different colour of metal than that used on the hydraulic lines of the MG, but we briefly swap cars while he checks over 'my' A.

All of the Vintage Tours cars are MGA 1600s, but there's considerably less stuffing in the chairs of the example that Matthias has been driving, making entry far easier. It feels a bit peppier, too, fitted with a sports exhaust and a high-compression cylinder head, but the pedalbox is somehow tighter and the brakes are not as keen. Like all post-war British sports cars, no two are exactly the same.

There's just 19km of Spain to drive through to get to the next border crossing, slightly further

south – because of the way the mountains are shaped, it's the most direct route to the Peneda-Gerês from the very north of Portugal. The road, now almost deserted of traffic, continues to climb through Spain to the Portela del Hambre border crossing that also marks the start of the national park. The old border checkpoint buildings haven't been demolished here, just boarded up and unused for 30 years, becoming relics of pre-Schengen Europe.

The forest is instantly much more dense past the border post, and the road begins a long, shallow descent through a new valley that combines long straights with switchback hairpins (left). Ruins and waterfalls line the road whenever there's a break in the vibrant, green, moss-covered trees; quite thoughtfully, there are plenty of stopping and viewing points, too. From the border to the main tourist town of the national park on the N308-1 is just 13km, but it takes more than 20 minutes to do that drive without stopping, such is the twistiness of the route. Were it not for the fact that there are other brilliant roads to explore in the national park, I would have happily turned around and done it all over again.

Valeska and Matthias know the best routes, and lead me on to a well-surfaced and deserted road that climbs into the mountains toward Miradouro Voltas de São Bento. It's at this point that I'm starting to understand why the MGA is so well suited to touring here: a faster, peakier car would be frustrated by some of these roads. They're narrow and the space between corners is often so short that there's not enough time to fully wind up the engine. You need something that majors on low-speed drivability, and here the MGA's slightly prosaic, Austin Cambridge-sourced drivetrain comes into its own.

The climb is long enough to be challenging without being tiresome, before the scenery changes and a mountain-top plateau opens up. An hour ago, the valley had looked like a primordial forest from *Jurassic Park*, now it's closer to the set of a Spaghetti Western. A flock of goats at least 200 strong walks right across the road at that moment, shepherded only by a dog. It appears to be just them, us and the two MGs for miles around.

It's a winding descent back to reality from here, the roads still enjoyable but gradually becoming less dramatic – though points of human interest such as the Pousada Mosteiro Amares, a sensationally pretty hotel that reportedly serves some of the best wine and food in the area, return to the roadside. With that, we've got to head back to Ponte de Lima, a route that takes in small towns and villages, some that are exceptionally pretty.



Valeska and Matthias (right) are learned navigators

It's the Peneda-Gerês that I'm stuck thinking about for the drive back and indeed for days after. The main road to and through it is spectacular, almost worth the trip in itself, but what really has me wanting to turn around and head back is a quick look at Google Maps, and seeing just how many small ribbons of Tarmac take off into the mountains around the national park. I sampled just one, and it was one of the finest roads I've ever driven – for its driver appeal, scenery and surface quality – and I saw just two other cars on it in an hour.

The clear drawback, perhaps the only one, of attempting a road trip in this part of Portugal from a British perspective is, of course, the distance. The Swiss Alps are closer, and so is Scotland. Valeska and Matthias are keen to help, by providing their cars, which, though the full tours come with their own costs, makes for a genuinely fun solution for those who don't want to drive all the way down, don't have their own classic car, or perhaps simply want to try something different. Self-drive classic-car hire firms are rare on the Continent, especially ones that encourage long, multi-day tours.

But the real takeaway of this trip has to be an

appreciation for this often-overlooked part of Europe. Tourists may swarm to Lisbon, Porto and the Algarve, but it's places such as Ponte de Lima and the Peneda-Gerês that petrolheads should put on their radar – however they can experience these roads. This part of Portugal – and indeed sections of Spain just over the border – is a real oasis for great driving. The distance from Europe's major automotive tourist hubs is no doubt part of what helps keep that the case. As a single route, the best bits

don't last as long as the highlights of Scotland's NC500, but if you're willing to explore an area rather than just go from A to B, it has real breadth. The scenery is beautiful and diverse, and the food's good, too. Get a car that suits it, such as an MGA, and it's certainly one for the bucket list. I know I'll be coming back. 

Thanks to Vintage Tours, whose tours of the region start from €2650 (or €2350 in your own classic). Call 0049 170 5746502 or see vintage-tours.com



SEVEN DECADES OF THE MGA

Although borrowing a fair amount from its TD and TF predecessors underneath, the new 1955 MGA was marketed as a fresh start for Abingdon's sports cars, finally throwing off the pre-war, separate-winged appearance of the T series. It proved to be a crucial bridge between the TF and the runaway success of the MGB, achieving strong sales of its own, especially in key foreign markets in the 'Export or Die' climate of the 1950s: 101,081 cars were sold in a seven-year run, with just 5% of those remaining in the UK.

1955-'59 MGA

Like the MG Magnette saloon, the MGA ditched the old XPAG/XPEG engines for a 1489cc version of BMC's then-new all-iron, ohv four-cylinder B-series producing 68bhp. With drum brakes all around, both Coupé and roadster variants were offered, with 58,750 produced in four years.

1958-'60 MGA Twin Cam

Any complaints about output were solved by 1958's Twin Cam, which, with an alloy, dohc cylinder head and a slight boost in capacity to 1588cc, took power to 108bhp. Four-wheel Dunlop disc brakes were fitted, too, but the engine was unreliable and created constant warranty claims. Later versions with lowered compression were better, but the model was pulled after just two years on sale and 2111 built.

1959-'61 MGA 1600

A more reliable power increase was achieved by using the larger, 1588cc bottom end with the iron, ohv cylinder head, providing 80bhp. Also fitted with

front disc brakes, the refreshed model suited the MG market far better and 31,501 were built in less than three years. Featuring styling identical to the earlier cars, bar slightly different lighting units and a 1600 badge, they are considered the *cognoscenti's* choice by many. A De Luxe model was also offered, using up leftover racing-style wheels and four-wheel disc brakes from the Twin Cam.

1961-'62 MGA 1600 MkII

Wearing a grille with its bars set back and perpendicular to the road, which some enthusiasts unkindly label 'pre-crashed', as well as tail-lights from a Mini, the MkII isn't considered the best-looking MGA, but it is perhaps the driver's pick. Power increased again to 90bhp through a reworked cylinder head and an increase in bore that took capacity to 1622cc, while a longer axle ratio calmed the MGA's previously frantic cruising manners. A De Luxe model was also produced, and 8719 MkIIs of all kinds were made before the MGB replaced the model.



Dramatic Miradouro
Voltas de São Bento
rock formation.
Below: goat herds
in the mountains of
the Peneda-Gerês



*'Tourists may swarm
to Lisbon, Porto and the
Algarve, but this part of
Portugal is a real oasis
for great driving'*



Dawn *of the* Octagon

The earliest survivors of the MG
marque meet to reveal the origins
of the Abingdon favourite

WORDS **SIMON HUCKNALL** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

Were it not for Morris Garages' need for a swift riposte to the launch of Morris Motors' Occasional Four model at the 1924 London Motor Show, the company soon to be known as MG might have become known for well-appointed saloons rather than sporting fare. Morris Motors Ltd had taken over car production from William Morris' WRM Motors in 1919, leaving his earlier firm, Morris Garages, to focus on sales and servicing in the Oxford area. Since the factory decreed that dealers could only sell within their region, Morris Garages – driven by the entrepreneurial spirit of its general manager, Cecil Kimber – began developing its own Morris-based

models, neatly circumventing the restriction.

The Chummy was an early example of this. Using a Cowley chassis, with Morris Garages' own two-seater body, it had (just about) room for an adult passenger or three small children, broadening its appeal while giving Kimber independence from the Morris factory. Sales were buoyant enough to necessitate a move from its Longwall Street premises to a larger mews garage in Alfred Lane, but the arrival of Morris' cheaper, four-seat Occasional Four forced the fledgling firm down a different path, one that would ultimately define its future.

Kimber had already produced a sporting version of the Chummy, inspired by a modified car in which he'd clinched a Gold Medal at the 1923 Land's End Trial. Six cars, now often seen as the first MGs, had two-seater coachwork by Oxford firm Charles Raworth, with raked



'screens and boat-style vents on their scuttle panels. But at £350 they were costly, especially when underpinned by near-standard Morris chassis and drivetrains. A thorough makeover of the factory hardware was needed to give Morris Garages products a more sporting edge to differentiate them – dynamically, as well as aesthetically – from their humble brethren.

The two cars with us today are the earliest survivors of Kimber's mission to achieve true separation from the Morris factory. By far the best-known is 'Old Number One', the first MG purpose-built for motorsport and the car that Kimber famously campaigned at the Motor Cycling Club's Land's End Trial in April 1925, in which he secured another Gold Medal. The distinctive boat-tailed saloon, a 1925 MG 14/28 Super Sports Bullnose Salonette, is the earliest MG production car in the world to survive in

a complete and unmolested state (an earlier bare chassis was unearthed more recently, but its restoration required replica bodywork and non-original mechanicals). Both the racer, built in March 1925, and the Salonette from two months later represented ground zero in terms of MG's future direction. It was another two years before the famous octagonal crest appeared on one of its cars, but the brand's transformation had begun in earnest.

Morris Garages had been producing what was advertised (but not badged) as an 'MG Saloon', based on a 14/28 Oxford chassis, since March 1924. The chassis was a simple frame, curved only at the front dumb-irons and with semi-elliptic springs all round, the rears attached to three-quarter-elliptics at the ends of the longerons. The back axle was in-unit with a torque tube containing the propshaft,



Clockwise: chic trim was a cut above stock Morris fare; room for four; warning for pursuers; tool storage; neat boat-tail style gives a sporting look



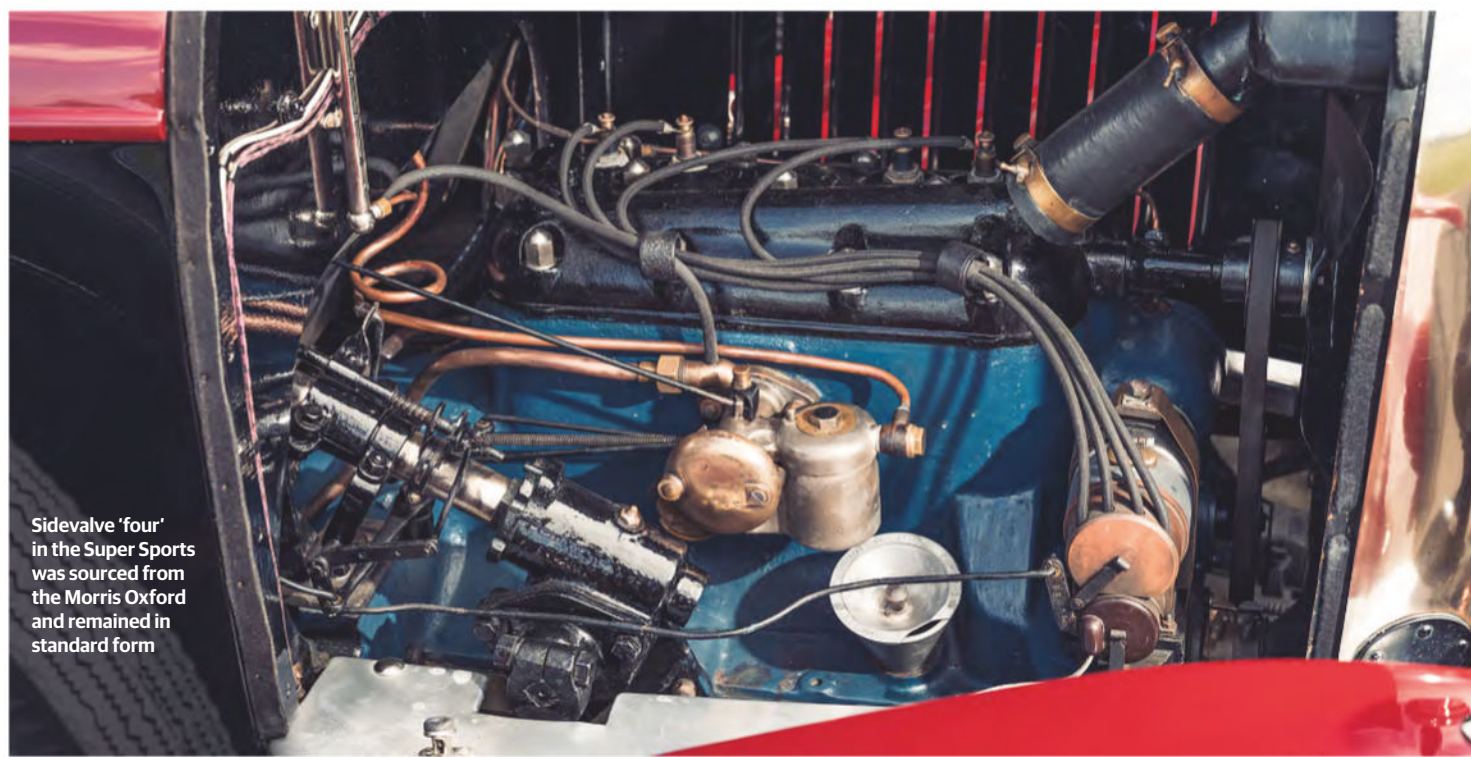
springs were flattened and the dampers improved to provide a firmer, better-controlled ride, while Ace discs covered the Oxford's standard artillery wheels. With these upgrades made, the rolling chassis would have been driven in its naked form the 60-odd miles to Carbodies in Coventry for coachwork and trim.

The new model was available as a two-seater tourer (or four-seater if specified with the 6in-longer, 9ft-wheelbase chassis) or a two-door Salonette, priced from £350 to £475. Customers could specify the colour of their choice for the aluminium-over-ash body, as well an interior trimmed in Bedford cord or leather. The result was a model so far removed, both visually and technically, from its Morris origins that Morris Garages felt justified in advertising it as the MG Super Sports, rather than a Morris, even though the Oxford's 14hp motor still powered it.

Mike Dacre's superbly presented and highly original 14/28 started life on 8 May 1925, when its rolling chassis, 90553, was despatched from Morris Motors – with a stock 1802cc sidevalve

which took its drive from an unrefined but durable Morris three-speed 'box. But it wasn't until late that year that Kimber and his team started to make improvements to the chassis ready for production in 1925 of the rebranded 'MG Super Sports'. The brake and throttle positions were switched to rid the car of its centre throttle (soon to become unfashionable among all makers), the steering box was moved to allow the column to be lower, and a different wheel replaced the Morris original. The rear

'four' – to Morris Garages for modification to Super Sports specification. Carbodies then received the order for a Salonette body, number 3888 (still recorded on the underside of the driver's footwell), releasing the finished car in June. Yet this early MG wasn't registered until six months later, on 9 December, when it gained the Berkshire number MO 6709. Today it is the sole surviving Salonette of six cars built in 1925, and one of only eight to exist from a total production of 21 up to 1926.



Sidevalve 'four' in the Super Sports was sourced from the Morris Oxford and remained in standard form

Old Number One's unique, experimental overhead-valve 'four' gives it a livelier edge, aided by the skimpy, lightweight body

MO's early history is a little sketchy, although it's thought that one of the first owners lived in Wiltshire. It received a new engine (to correct Oxford spec) in 1928, which is still fitted today. By the early '70s it was in Rettendon, Essex, but in 1975 this rare Super Sports joined the Sharpe family car collection and was put on display in Ramsgate Motor Museum. There it lived for 30 years, before being sold at auction in 2005.

Having been a museum car, MO presented very well, reflected in the £42,300 it achieved.

Nonetheless, marque specialist Fred Body was commissioned to undertake a sympathetic restoration, carefully stripping the bodyshell, removing and rebuilding the engine, and repainting the car in a similar colour to that in which it had left Carbodies 80 years earlier. MO's cabin was fully retrimmed, though all the original instruments and fittings were retained. Mike acquired the car in 2021 and has been passionate about raising awareness of its significance. A second place (behind the famed Le Mans Bentley, 'Old Number One') at the Concours of Elegance in 2023 illustrates how much love there is for such an untypical MG, as did a Best in Class at The Quail last year.

And untypical of the marque this Super Sports certainly is. Were it not for its distinctive 'bullnose' radiator, you wouldn't immediately associate it with a regular Morris. There's a hint of the gothic in its split 'screen', topped by a gently rising roofline incorporating the world's smallest sunroof. MO's subtle dark red over black suits its discreet looks, set off by its Ace wheel covers. But it's the Super Sports' rear styling that sets it apart from other mid-market

British vintage-era saloons. The tapered stern extends beyond the chassis and mudguards, and continues the marine theme that starts with the twin intakes atop the scuttle. It's highly practical, boasting a huge boot area, albeit accessed through a smallish lid. What looks like a petrol tank below is actually a further stowage space for tools, attached to which is a 'FOUR WHEEL BRAKES' warning triangle, should following drivers assume that the Super Sports' rate of retardation be at all leisurely.



Clockwise from left: 1.5-litre motor likes to rev; snug cockpit fronted by handsome, engine-turned dashboard; elegantly tapering tail; four-wheel brakes feature on both models



Enter the car, with a twist of an elegantly crafted brass loop, and there's no doubt the quality of the trim and fittings would have surpassed that of any of Lord Nuffield's stock Morris offerings, with wood inlays around the window frames, smart veneers across the well-stocked dash, and door cards trimmed with burgundy fabric and leather. There's plenty of stowage and ample room for even adults in the rear, though the seat squab is quite shallow.

The Morris 'four' starts easily and settles to a dull rumble. By Mike's own admission, MO is "not a driver", but engage first in its central dog-leg gate and the Salonette is a willing enough performer, yet it's the suspension and steering that would have defined how it drove compared to a regular Oxford. When most cars in this era were tourers – including the more popular Super Sports variant – it would have been a novelty to drive a saloon with sporting pretensions. While we're hardly doorhandling MO today, it does corner neatly, steering into bends accurately and safely. You'd never be in fear of outbraking the car behind, though: the four-wheel stoppers lack any real bite, a trait afflicting many cars with this early technology.

But the Super Sports was only part of Cecil Kimber's armoury for carving out MG's more enthusiast image. Competition success was key, and to achieve that with the Morris-based chassis meant looking at alternative engines. The sidevalve Oxford 'four' had been developed from an American design by Hotchkiss in its English factory. An overhead-valve unit had been tested but never used, and discarded at the Morris engine works in Coventry, where Kimber found it. The 1548cc unit had its camshaft mounted low in the block, operating in-line valves with double springs via a system of tappets, pushrods and rockers. Carburetion was originally by a single SU (it now has a more modern 1¼in item), with fuel pressurised by hand from the cockpit. The 'new' engine was mated to the standard, but tough, Morris three-speed 'box.

Kimber's plan was to install this drivetrain in a one-off competition car, based on a bullnose Cowley chassis, and enter it in the 1925 Land's End Trial. Carbodies designed and manufactured a lightweight body and the chassis was modified, with the rear frame cut off and replaced by new rails that curved over the rear axle to locate splayed rear springs. The front semi-elliptic springs were retained, while those at the rear were simply mounted to the chassis, without supporting three-quarter elliptics. Standard three-stud hubs were used, to which tall wire wheels with 7.1-90 tyres were fitted. Braking was by stock Morris drums and, as with the Super Sports, the steering column was lowered.

Reportedly costing just £279 to build, Old Number One repaid MG's investment many times over. After winning a Gold Medal in the Light Car Class at Land's End, Kimber sold the car to a friend for £300. Soon after it was seen



MG 'OLD NUMBER ONE'

Constructed/number built 1924/one

Construction pressed steel chassis, aluminium bodywork

Engine all-iron, ohv 1548cc Hotchkiss 'four', single SU carburettor, air-pressure fuel feed

Max power 11.9hp (RAC rating)

Max torque n/a

Transmission three-speed manual, RWD

Suspension semi-elliptic leaf springs f/r; Gabriel Snubbers dampers front, Hartford dampers rear

Steering Marles steering box

Brakes drums

Length/Width/Height n/a

Wheelbase 8ft 6in (2591mm)

Weight n/a **0-60mph** 20 secs

Top speed 80mph **Mpg** n/a

Price new/now n/a

MG 14/28 SUPER SPORTS BULLNOSE SALONETTE

Sold/number built 1925-'26/21

Construction pressed steel chassis; aluminium body over ash frame

Engine all-iron, sidevalve 1802cc 'four', single Solex MHD carburettor

Max power 13.9hp (RAC rating)

Max torque n/a

Transmission three-speed manual, RWD

Suspension semi-elliptic leaf springs, Hartford dampers f/r

Steering Morris steering box

Brakes drums **Length** 12ft 6in (38mm)

Width n/a **Height** n/a

Wheelbase 8ft 10in (2692mm)

Weight n/a **0-60mph** n/a

Top speed 65mph **Mpg** 22-24 (est)

Price new £450 **Price now** £50-85,000

'The Super Sports was only part of Kimber's armoury for carving out an enthusiast image for MG: competition success would be key'

From top: Old Number One feels nimble; 14/28 hides its origins well; badge evolution; MG pioneers reunited





Sporty and stylish Salonette offered something different to motorists. Above: curved scuttle gives limited protection from the elements



towing a pig-food trailer, then almost ended its days in a Manchester scrapyards. Had it not been spotted by an MG employee in 1932 and bought for £15, this historic car might have been lost. After returning to Abingdon, it was rebuilt and its original primer-grey coachwork was painted red. Given the 'Old Number One' moniker, it was used for promotional purposes, with a further restoration taking place in 1950. Today the car is a proud exhibit at the British Motor Museum in Gaydon, Warwickshire.

We're with Old Number One just a week after its return from recreating Kimber's run up 'Old Blue Hills Mine' (*News*, July). Like the Super Sports, the racer is boat-tailed, but there the similarities end. Daintily proportioned, with tiny, angular mudguards, its bullnose grille is the only visual link with its modified Morris

underpinnings. You sit low on slim leather chairs, the riding mechanic mounted a few inches back from the driver. There's no 'screen, with the scuttle curved up to deflect wind and flies; Kimber and his man have their faces partially obscured by it in a photograph from the trial, and the same goes for me as I peer over the lip to get a better view. MG added extra dials across the engine-turned dash, including a tachometer, and pressure gauges for oil and fuel. You find yourself close to a medium-sized three-spoke wheel and, like in the Super Sports, the pedal positions are conventional, with the wand-like gearlever centrally positioned.

Old Number One is a joy to drive. The exhaust sounds unbaffled, rewarding with a crisp and urgent timbre from the experimental 'four'. The controls are light, with the single-plate

cork clutch surprisingly progressive as you pull away. The steering feels 50% quicker than the Super Sports', which, combined with restricted vision, means corner apices are a hit-and-miss affair to start with. Body control is tight and secure, and the little car thrives on revs, to the point where I'm changing up early to prevent any damage. A glitch with the brakes means slowing requires more effort than I'm told it usually does, but it doesn't spoil the enjoyment of what was clearly a talented standard-bearer for the freshly minted MG brand.

I'm not sure how Kimber would have viewed the Chinese-built creations that now wear the octagon, but I hope today's company realises that there was life before the MGB.

Thanks to BMM (britishmotormuseum.co.uk)



Here's what you could

In 1967, 'King of the kustomizers' George Barris created four attention-grabbing promotional cars for oil giant Esso to give away as prizes

WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **PAWEL LITWINSKI**



have won



Clockwise: the 67-X is swift, smooth and effortless on the move; bold badge and Barris crest; dummy bonnet vents

There is a long history of petroleum manufacturers and promotional offers, particularly in the days prior to when service stations became convenience stores. At a certain point in fairly recent history, the sale of fuel seemingly became incidental to flogging the driving public ready meals, toiletries and almost anything else you can think of.

That business model kicked off in the 1980s as the motoring masses became ever more disassociated from the inner workings of their increasingly bland – but also increasingly reliable – family saloons and hatchbacks.

Today, that transition of the automobile into pure ‘white goods’ status is complete; contrast this situation, though, with the late ‘60s and early ‘70s, when drivers lifted the bonnets of their vehicles at least once a week (maybe even before the oil warning light came on), and when even my non-driving, fully paid-up pedestrian grandad could tell the difference between the exhaust note of one neighbour’s Ford Anglia and another’s Volkswagen Beetle.

My memory goes back to the days of two-, three-, four- and even full-fat five-star petrol: nobody had even heard of unleaded. A time when the self-service pumps we have today had become all but universal, yet the smelly DERV pump was still banished to a lonely, dirty corner of the forecourt. That’s if it was to be seen at all. Before the mid-1980s, almost nobody – other than black-cab drivers – drove an oil-burner, at least not outside the world of heavy-goods vehicles.

A fuel station was neither a retail experience nor an opportunity. All that was offer in the forecourt ‘shop’ was a Twix, a Mars Bar and a Kit Kat (all slightly more substantial than their modern equivalents), possibly a road atlas, a few cans of polish and interior ‘smellies’.

Occasionally, there was the chance to use one of the newfangled automatic car washes that pulled off your windscreen wipers and wing mirrors, but most 1970s people still washed the family Cortina or 1100 by hand on a Sunday morning, before settling down with a copy of the *News of the World* or watching Brian Walden interview an MP on *Weekend World*.

Nowadays you’ll likely struggle to even locate the tiny selection of overpriced engine oil, fuel cans and antifreeze, but the 1970s petrol station sometimes sold quite expensive consumables such as fanbelts, batteries and even tyres for popular models. The ‘offers’, meanwhile, at least in Britain, usually amounted to Green Shield Stamps and a set of tumblers.

Unsurprisingly, the Americans thought bigger – as did the Canadians, particularly in the nation’s 100th-anniversary year of 1967. With the modern road network fully opening up, more and more Canadians wanted to see the country in their cars, particularly in the year that Canada was hosting the World’s Fair – Expo 67, which opened in Montreal in April of that year. The various oil companies – Fina, Supertest, Texaco and all the rest – sniffed a good promotional opportunity: more driving meant increased gas sales, and all concerned wanted a bigger share of that meatier pie.

Thus, they were not exactly slow at coming up with exciting competitions. From these, the winning entrants could end up with a new Ford Mustang or Mercury Cougar on their driveways, maybe a colour television in the lounge (a big deal in 1967, because colour programmes were only just starting to appear), or just a straightforward cash prize.

Imperial Oil, which had started using the Esso name, wanted to go one better. The plan was to sponsor the creation of a set of four bespoke dream cars that could be given away in a publicity-creating prize draw as part of the Esso Road Show, which was itself heavily tied



in with the firm’s sponsorship of the hockey league. The PR team wanted the winning entrants to use the cars for at least a year on the road before they might sell them on, the idea being they would serve as mobile billboards for Esso. The firm promised free fuel, insurance and servicing for 12 months on cars that were to be fully compliant with Canadian traffic laws (and retain the original manufacturer’s warranty) and, most importantly, ‘family orientated’ for what would be billed as ‘the most imaginative travel award ever conceived’.

The cars were to feature extensively in television advertising and would even have a special pseudo-folk jingle written in their honour. There were ‘instant’ prizes of cameras and TV sets, but to win one of the cars entrants had to have collected five road-safety-tip tickets from the 2400 Canadian Esso fuel stations to get a chance to enter the draw. The winners would then be announced on the radio and in press advertisements in May, June, July and August of 1967, with the prize cars to be displayed at the World’s Fair, various shopping malls and Esso forecourts to whip up interest.



Below: original 7-litre V8 engine has been replaced by a 7.4-litre



Left-right: Barris' signature flair; owner Trevor Weffen; Dominion tyres were designed for the front-drive Toronado



Obviously, the promotional car would have to be based on an existing vehicle – but what? That decision was left to a certain George Barris, Hollywood's 'King of kustomizers'. As well as dreaming up bespoke glamour machinery for the likes of Elvis, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, Barris, already a legend, had recently come to further prominence by creating TV's Munster Koach and, most famously, the Batmobile.

He soon came down in favour of Oldsmobile's then still relatively new Toronado. It looked futuristic out of the box, but, importantly, being front-drive, it didn't have a propshaft, leaving Barris free to change the wheelbase at will without affecting the drivetrain.

Four brand-new, \$6373 7-litre Toronados were sent from Lansing, Michigan, to the Barris Kustom Industries workshops in Hollywood where, at around the same time, George must have been working on the Toronado-based roadster for the *Mannix* television series (C&SC, March 2020).

While the *Mannix* Toronado had its roof chopped off, the Esso-sponsored cars, costing

an alleged \$52,000 each to build, were cut in half and had their wheelbases extended from 119 to 134in, to give an imposing overall length of more than 20ft. The standard five-/six-seater Toronado was not notably lacking in interior space, but the 67-X had a truly gigantic cabin with room for a wraparound, sofa-like rear seat. As well as full air conditioning, tinted

'The Toronado looked futuristic out of the box and it didn't have a propshaft, so Barris could change the wheelbase at will'

glass and all the usual Toronado refinements, Barris fitted his Esso 67-Xs with twin FM/AM radios front and back (rear passengers got headphones), plus two stereo tape decks in the 'hand-rubbed' Brazilian walnut centre console. Two cars were painted gold, with one each finished in burgundy red and avocado green.

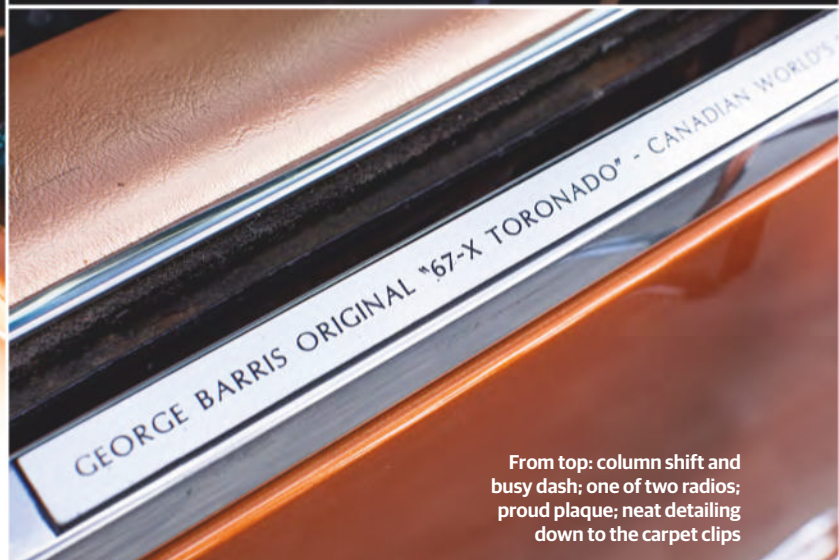
Apart from the front 'screen and basic door casings, everything outwardly was visually altered: the bonnet grew two massive bulges, each with four portholes, while the sleek front end gave way to an eggcrate grille with four circular fixed headlights (since replaced by twin ovoid units on this car). The bulging front and rear wings were worked up in glassfibre, and various embellishments – wheel covers, doorhandles and bumpers – were bespoke, giving no clue to their Oldsmobile origins.

A Mr WC Hackett of Edmonton was the first 67-X winner in May. After flying the 52-year-old Hackett to Hollywood for promotional filming, Esso presented him with one of the gold cars. He kept it for a year and 24,000 miles before accepting an offer he couldn't refuse from a Toronto dealer.

Car number two, the example pictured here, was awarded to 53-year-old Walter Scales from British Columbia; he, too, parted with it when the free fuel, insurance and servicing ended, and went back driving his Volkswagen Beetle.



From top: TV was likely a later addition, but fits in; over-assisted steering lacks feel; huge rear cabin features fold-up table and wraparound corner sofa



From top: column shift and busy dash; one of two radios; proud plaque; neat detailing down to the carpet clips





Front passenger seat rotates to create a lounge area. Current owner Trevor has retrimmed the cabin with copper vinyl in place of grey

The third example went to a French Canadian called Michel Bussière. He sold it on in 1969 for \$10,000, which was enough to buy him a new Chrysler and a campervan.

This latter car has since disappeared, along with a fifth 67-X George Barris built for himself as a tow car (it was also used in a photoshoot promoting crooner Dean Martin's Goldiggers, his all-girl Las Vegas song-and-dance troupe).

The fourth example, the burgundy car, has been in long-term family ownership since the 1980s. It was presented new in August 1967 to 26-year-old Paul Sparrow, a Vauxhall Viva-driving lab technician from Fort William, Ontario, who sold it after six months to help fund a first home for his young family. Quite apart from the sheer size of the thing, all the winners found that the amount of attention the 67-X got when out in public was not always welcome. They would often return to crowds of awestruck pedestrians five deep, or else be continually pulled over by the police, usually just to enquire about the car.

Of the three known 67-X survivors, car number two possibly has the most colourful history. The second owner, from 1970, was a rancher who soon passed it on to flamboyant, trumpet-playing Vancouver restaurateur Frank Baker, who used it to promote his business. Baker also owned one of the *Goldfinger* Aston Martin DB5s, but he had to sell both cars when his restaurant folded in the '80s. From there the

'The 67-X goes cheerfully where it is bidden with a surprising lack of drama. It has immense torque and is whisper-quiet'

67-X emigrated to the United States and turned up on eBay in 2011, which is where Palm Springs-based collector Trevor Weflen first saw it advertised, initially spotting it in the background of an ad for another car. Hailing from Saskatchewan, Trevor remembered the 67-X from the original competition.

The massive coupe had supposedly been subjected to a recent \$99,000 restoration, so Trevor bought it sight unseen, only to find that it had a lot of detail electrical problems – “only the speedo was working” – and a slightly tired engine, but the body and paint were good. The engine problems were sorted by fitting a freshly rebuilt lump from a later, 7.4-litre car. Having trained in the Royal Canadian Air Force as a metal technician, and run a successful custom upholstery business, Trevor was and is pretty handy on the tools. He was able to rebuild the front suspension himself and retrim the interior in his preferred shade of copper vinyl, rather than the original grey.

As standard (on the original Toronado), the massive, frameless doors are still almost certainly the longest items ever fitted to a production car. The 67-X's Barris-modified extended wheelbase is illustrated most obviously in the longer rear side windows, although over-the-shoulder rear vision is poor because the C-pillar is so massive.

The dash is stock Toronado, but the front seats are separate buckets: the driver's is power-adjustable, while the passenger can swivel to face the rear seats, where there is legroom to rival a limo, plus built-in litter bins, reading lights and even a toy-storage cupboard. The coolbox for picnics was part of the original specification, but, as far as I can tell, the tiny black-and-white television on the centre console is a later addition, albeit one very much in keeping with the spirit of a car conceived as a long-distance travelling lounge room.

Under the bonnet – large enough to land a jump-jet on – it looks pretty much like any other Toronado, complete with side-mounted GM400 gearbox driven by a robust and silent chain, and power going to the front wheels.

If anything, the 67-X rides better than the standard car on its longer wheelbase, possibly helped by the fact that Trevor, who does about 200 miles a year in it attending local shows,

managed to find a rare set of TFD (Toronado Front Drive) tyres designed specifically for the standard car. The powerfully assisted steering and brakes are devoid of feel, but the 67-X goes cheerfully where it is bidden with a surprising lack of drama. It is far from slow, has immense low- and mid-range torque, and is whisper-quiet. You are barely conscious of the gearbox and only a rustle of remote reciprocation as it romps away. It is everything you expect a big, fast American coupe of the '60s to be.

The 67-X could well be the most generous prize ever given away in a service-station competition, and it is certainly the most imaginative. It's not necessarily a visual improvement on the standard Toronado, but it beats filling up 1500 books of Green Shield Stamps just to get a Mk1 Ford Escort.

Thanks to Trevor Weflen, Donald Osborne, Jeff Stork and Scott King



This car was the second of four to be given away. Note extravagant fins extending into flamboyant chrome tips at the rear



ESSO 67-X

Sold/number built 1967/five

Construction steel perimeter frame, steel body

Engine all-iron, ohv 6967cc V8, four-barrel

Rochester carburettor

Max power 386bhp @ 4800rpm

Max torque 475lb ft @ 3200rpm

Transmission four-speed HydraMatic auto, FWD

Suspension: front independent, by wishbones,

torsion bars, anti-roll bar **rear** beam axle,

single-leaf springs; telescopic dampers f/r

Steering power-assisted recirculating ball

Brakes drums **Length** 20ft 1in (6121mm)

Width 6ft 6½in (1994mm)

Height 4ft 5in (1346mm)

Wheelbase 9ft 11in (3023mm)

Weight 4570lb (2073kg)

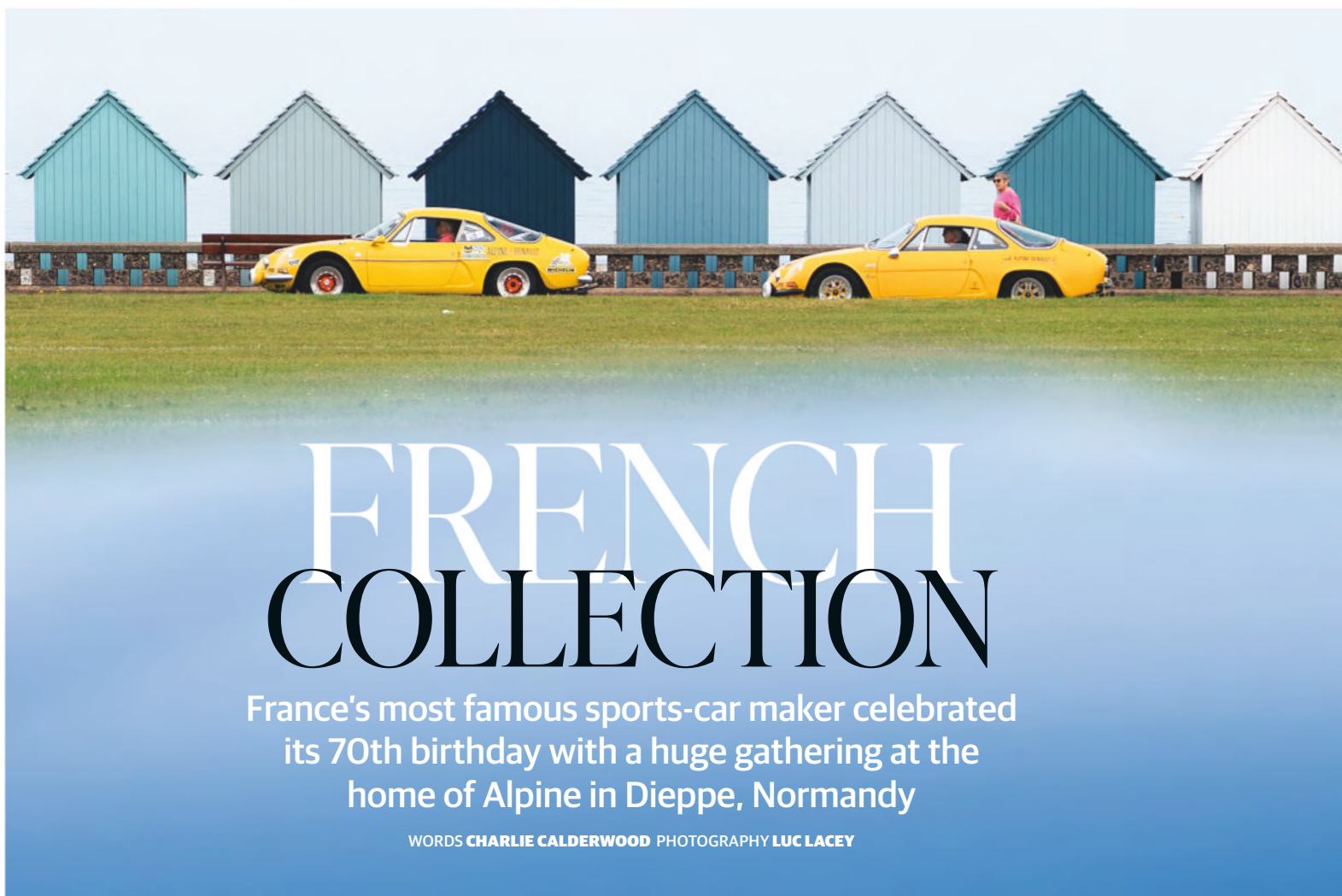
0-60mph 8.7 secs

Top speed 126mph **Mpg** 11.8

Price new \$52,000 **Price now** \$250,000



Barris added a full 15in to the Toronado's wheelbase alone. He kept a fifth example for himself



FRENCH COLLECTION

France's most famous sports-car maker celebrated its 70th birthday with a huge gathering at the home of Alpine in Dieppe, Normandy

WORDS CHARLIE CALDERWOOD PHOTOGRAPHY LUC LACEY



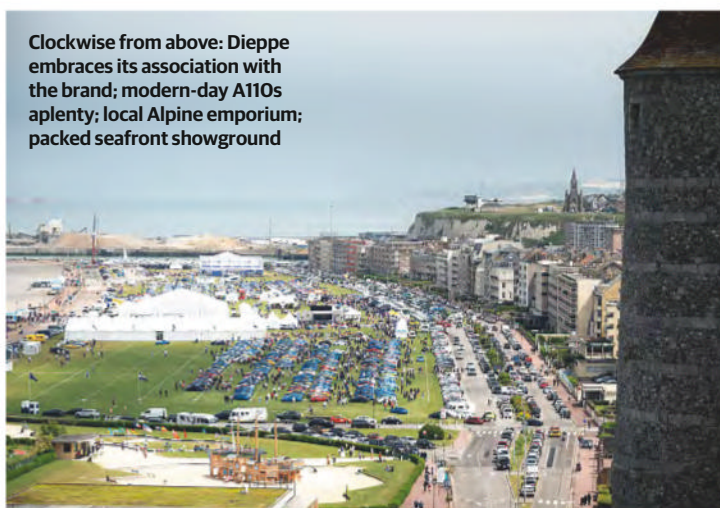
Left-right: A108 came as coupé, cabrio or, as here, 2+2; rallying is key to Alpine's heritage; reborn A110 has been a springboard for the modern marque

It all started with Jean Rédélé razzing around in his Renault 4CV. The youngest Renault dealer in France following WW2, Rédélé cut his teeth – metaphorically, but perhaps also those of the transmission variety – wringing every last horsepower out of his 747cc saloon as he barrelled through Normandy's famous *bocage*. Before long, in 1954, a quest for further speed led him to fit lower, lighter coupé bodywork to a 4CV chassis, and a year later he founded his own company, Alpine, to do just that at scale.

The scale has never been *that* large, though. Official estimates are that only 45,000 Alpines have been built to date, and 25,000 of those have been in just the past eight years thanks to the revived A110. Every year Alpine enthusiasts come to Dieppe, where this small but celebrated

marque has always been based. From 30 May–1 June, however, it hosted a big blowout – the biggest yet. Alpine is 70 years old in 2025, and the marque is in its rudest health since at least the 1970s, having just launched two new models. When the 60th-anniversary event happened in 2015, the brand had been dormant for 20 years; this time more than 1000 Alpines returned home, representing around 2.5% of all the cars produced so far. Almost every Alpine variant was present on the show field, and the few gaps left were filled by the maker's own pop-up museum at the centre of it all.

It was in that display space where Alpine enthusiasts were able to see one of the three Michelotti 'Marquis' prototypes. The Italian stylist was contracted to style the first true Alpine, the A106, so named because of the Renault 4CV's internal model code of '106E' –



Left-right: Renault 8 Gordini; A110 GT4 and proud owner (see p109); FASA Alpine, Willys Interlagos and Dinalpin among others in the 'pop-up' museum

the car is essentially a sporting body dropped on to the lower monocoque of a 4CV.

The arrival of the Renault Dauphine gave Alpine access to larger, 845cc engines (and, later, those tuned to Gordini specification), prompting the release of the new A108 in 1958. Again styled by Michelotti, the A108 not only set the brand's visual identity for decades to come, but also moved over to a backbone chassis similar to that of a Lotus Elan or TVR.

While the chassis of the new model was bespoke, however, Rédélé stuck to a low-investment, labour-intensive system that ensured all chassis components were either made from simple steel box-sections that could be handmade or, in the case of the stamped front axle, lifted straight from a Renault.

This approach allowed for cheap changes in bodywork, and Alpine duly offered 2+2 and

cabriolet models alongside the more popular and numerous coupé version. It also made these cars an easy first step for nascent car manufacturers in developing markets: the A108 was licence-built by Willys-Overland in Brazil as the Interlagos, while the A110 would also be produced in Mexico, Spain and Bulgaria. All but the rare 'Bulgaralpine' were present at the anniversary bash.

Rédélé's tactic meant that he had to follow Renault's product planning evolution, and the A110 arrived in 1963 to move over to Renault 8 running gear, including larger engines and a switch from a radiator at the front of the engine to the back. Late A110s even made use of Alfa Romeo tail-lights after the stocks of R8 parts ran dry. Especially in R16 TS-powered 1600S form, the A110 proved to be Alpine's seminal moment. Rally success, which up to

that point had largely been limited to class wins, became overall victories. Monte-Carlo honours came in 1971 and '73, and the marque took the inaugural World Rally Championship in 1973. Renault finally absorbed Alpine that same year, allowing the creation of the Renault 5 Alpine (badged Gordini in the UK, thanks to a clash with the Chrysler Alpine); in '76 the two companies' sporting divisions merged, too.

The last act of R  d  l  s leadership had been the introduction of the A310 in 1971, and, although it's often seen as a successor to the A110, the cars remained on sale together for six years. Alpine finally moved over to the A310 as its sole product in 1977, when the car adopted PRV V6 power. Ever-increasing numbers of Renault-branded products were built at the Dieppe factory, too, becoming Renault's go-to plant for low-volume work. This included the outlandish Renault 5 Turbo, but also the later Renault Sport Clio and M  ganes.

It seemed logical to Renault, therefore, to name the A310's 1984 successor the Renault-Alpine GTA, of which a turbocharged variant was released the following year. That car developed into the A610, by then badged under the Alpine marque again, but the name lay dormant after Dieppe switched to producing the Renault Sport Spider in 1995.

Rebirth came thanks to a joint venture with Caterham, which would help to offset development costs, although the British firm later pulled out. Renault decided to continue with the revived Alpine A110 and acquired Caterham's 50% stake in the project. The car

'Porsche has built far more 911s, while others offer greater power. Yet an Alpine gives a feeling few cars can match'

was released in 2017 to widespread acclaim, and it has become by far the most successful Alpine model to date. This, combined with the rebranding of the Renault Formula One team to Alpine in 2021, has led to a surprising revival of the brand: it now boasts two EV models alongside the A110, which is soon to be replaced by an electric successor itself. Unlike at many points in its past history, Alpine's future now looks secure for years to come.

"It's all about passion" explains Jean-Pascal Dauce, who put together the pop-up museum at Dieppe. "If you want big numbers, that's not Alpine." Porsche has built far more 911s, Jean-Pascal admits, while plenty of cars offer greater power and faster top speeds. Yet for many, an Alpine gives a feeling few other cars can match. Jean-Pascal proudly lists famous owners of the new A110, including Gordon Murray, James May and a number of F1 drivers. "I'm not saying we are the best," concludes Jean-Pascal. "I'm just saying we have always delivered something special. That's the DNA of the brand."



Herv   & Chantel Busnel **ALPINE A310 V6**

Herv   Busnel's attachment to Alpine is one born of patriotism: he had lusted after an A310 as a child, having grown up with it as the sole French sports car in the face of countless competitors from Germany, Italy, Britain and Japan. Herv   restored his 1981 A310 V6 himself, taking it from a wreck – "it was never meant to be driven again," he says – to its current immaculate condition in just two and a half years.



Bernd Orie **ALPINE A106**

Just 650 A106s were made, making it the rarest of all Alpine products. Oddly, however, Dieppe still built the occasional A106 long after the A108 had succeeded it, some even using later Dauphine engines. Bernd Orie's car is a 4CV-based example, which he says is a blessing when it comes to keeping the car on the road: spare parts remain available despite the model's rarity.

Hermann Galati **ALPINE A110 1600S**

Having driven over from Switzerland, Hermann Galati is no stranger to the Alpine passion: he has owned his A110 for 32 years. Hermann first learnt of the model while playing *Top Trumps*, and he decided he had to buy the model the first time he spotted one on the street. Although it has been completely restored mechanically, its outer bodywork is original. "It's terrible to drive," he says, only half-joking, "but it gives you a sensation like nothing else."





Stéphane Sevenou **RENAULT ALPINE GTA TURBO LE MANS**

Stéphane Sevenou got into Alpines after looking for an upgrade from his Renault 5 GT Turbo. A project to restore an A310 stalled, so he bought this GTA in 2019. The Le Mans is a popular special edition, with more than 300 built from 1990-'91. It featured a wider body and a restyled front end that would influence the A610 launched later in 1991. Mechanically it's easy to look after, Stéphane says, but finding Alpine-specific parts, especially some interior trim items, can be difficult.



André Laurier & Marie Vette **ALPINE A110 GT4**

André Laurier grew up in Pau loving all things car-related, and he also owns a Singer Nine. He lusted after an A110 Berlinette, but the desire for extra passenger space so he could bring his children along for the ride, plus the cheaper prices of GT4s, led him to pick up a 2+2 model in 2003. André trailered his car to the event, but when he attended the 50th-anniversary party in 2005 he drove up from Pau in one day.

Guy Coquard **ALPINE A110 RALLY REPLICA**

Even among a field of Alpine fanatics, few could match Guy's commitment to the marque. This A110 was his first car, and he has owned it ever since, rebuilding it into a replica of Jean-Luc Thérier's 1971 Rallye Monte-Carlo car, which the Normand drove to second place.

Part of a group of Alpine drivers known as 'Les Mousquetaires', Thérier is often the enthusiast's favourite: he was known for his instinctive driving style, and for practising far less than other pilots. While otherwise based on the standard road car, Guy's A110 uses an original engine bored out to 1.8 litres by the Alpine factory.





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THE CREATOR TURNED CURATOR

Jean-Pascal Dauce assembled the Alpine pop-up museum display for the Dieppe anniversary event, gathering cars from the Rédélé family, club members and Renault's own heritage collection. It's a practice run for the former engineer, who is heading up a project considering a permanent Alpine museum in Dieppe.

Jean-Pascal has worked in Formula One, as well as on many of Renault Sport's greatest hits, but it's the relaunched A110 of which he is most proud. He bought the new car as soon as it was released, and he owns a restored A110 Berlinette that was used by Renault's designers for reference when creating the new model.

Jean-Pascal was at Renault when the Caterham joint venture collapsed, and he credits then-Renault COO Carlos Tavares (later to serve as long-time CEO of PSA/Stellantis) with supporting the project, even after its financial prospects changed.

The A110 sports hangovers from that early collaboration with Caterham (which would have spawned a sister model called the C120), such as the lack of a glovebox. "That's my fault," Jean-Pascal explains. "There was too much pressure from Tony Fernandes [then Caterham's owner] to make it a very particular kind of car."



Gérard du Large ALPINE A110

Gérard du Large has lusted after an Alpine since he was 18 years old, when he watched the marque's rally exploits as a teenager, but the cost of insuring a sports car meant he had to put his dreams on hold. Decades later, Gérard approached retirement with the funds to purchase a sports car as a present to himself. He initially considered a Porsche, but was scared off by their reputation for high upkeep costs. Then Alpine's relaunch was announced, and he has owned his A110 ever since.



Jean-Claude Bernard ALPINE A110 GT4

Although most famous as a Berlinette, the A110 was also available as a 2+2, the GT4. Unlike the preceding A108 2+2, the GT4's rear seats are fairly practical, while the car's styling was much better resolved: it resembled an Alfa Romeo Giulia 105-series coupé in profile. Jean-Claude Bernard is just the third owner of his example, which he bought in 2005 and fully restored over two years. He drove the car up from La Rochelle to the Dieppe event. A serial Renault/Alpine fan, he has also owned an Alpine GTA alongside a whole host of Renault models.



Jean-Marc Cobé RENAULT ALPINE GTA TURBO

Jean-Marc has owned his car for a long time, considering he only stumbled across it. Originally he went looking for a Simca 1000, but when he discovered that he could buy an Alpine GTA Turbo for a similar price, he bought the Renault – and has owned it for the past 21 years. Its long-distance

touring ability is a key part of the appeal: it's comfortable and has a huge, 72-litre fuel tank over the front axle. Nonetheless, he says, it keeps up with friends' smaller sports cars on back-roads.

S M O O *operators*



The restrained style of Humber's Super Snipe and Hawk delivered

WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

Pre-Beatles, pre-Profumo affair, the 'own brand' British luxury saloon market was in full swing in the late 1950s and early '60s. These cars – Zodiacs, Crestas and Super Snipes – brought glamour to high streets and driveways that would rarely play host to a Jaguar or Bentley, never mind the import-duty-loaded European offerings.

Generally viewed as being somewhere between the well-engineered Rover 3 Litre and the somewhat flashier Ford/Vauxhall barges in the hierarchy of such vehicles, the Humbers, either six-cylinder Super Snipe or four-cylinder Hawk, didn't pretend to be 'driver's cars'. Yet for the audience at which they were aimed they

were transports of delight, offering smooth, roomy and quiet travel with effortless urge in a spacious and over-engineered, but under-rust-proofed, mass-produced unitary body that was noted for its good finish and solidity.

With room for six, this was Rootes' first monocoque and for a while the largest unitary car built in the UK. The panels were pressed in London, the saloons assembled in Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Warwickshire. Carbodies, famous for its Austin taxi bodies, produced the stylish Hawk and Super Snipe estate shells from late '57. These impressively finished load-carriers – good for hauling 850lb – were really Britain's first mass-produced luxury station wagons, offered at a £200 premium over the saloons.

The Hawk and Super Snipe were the first

THE



robust, sub-Jaguar luxury with a particular kind of everyman appeal

Humbers designed around an automatic transmission (the Borg-Warner DG), but they were routinely sold with column-shift manuals, often with Laycock overdrive, for those still mistrustful of clutchless driving: four speeds on the Hawk, a US-inspired three-speeder on the Super Snipe. Torque peaked at 1800rpm in the Snipe, so there was little need to change gear often, and you could play tunes on the overdrive on second and top. Later, the Super Snipe pioneered the option of power-assisted steering on a sub-3-litre British car, although the Hydrosteer system was a dealer- rather than factory-fitted extra at first.

These cars are from an era when automotive roles were more clearly defined and drivers more sedate. Gear ratios, spring rates and

power outputs were tweaked over the years, but nobody buying into this ultimate Rootesmobile expected exciting performance or nimble handling, even if modest successes in the RAC Rally (driven by Raymond Baxter) and the East African Safari at least suggested they were robust enough to go the distance. Fit and finish, as with most of the Rootes output, was above average. Tellingly, the range had a good right-hand-drive 'colonial' reputation: Hawks and Super Snipes were assembled from knocked-down kits in both Australia and New Zealand.

Visually the 'Series' Humbers (as opposed to the previous 'Mark' types) pandered to the still-popular weakness for subtle Americana: neutered tailfins and fairly generous chrome, decorating a Chevrolet-inspired shape that

always appeared, tastefully, just out of fashion.

Underneath, they came from a big-car tradition of unexciting mechanisms and rudimentary chassis design. A long, hefty, all-iron, in-line engine – sited well forward of the front wheels and driving a leaf-sprung live rear axle – was the default layout. The wishbone front suspension was carried on a subframe; noise-isolating rubber mountings and a space-saving divided propshaft were new ideas, even if the 20 grease points – needing attention every 1000 miles – had a very pre-war feel.

As the 1960s dawned, these high-nesting birds of the Rootes flock were already quite elderly designs. The four-cylinder 2267cc Hawk had appeared first in May 1957, with its 75bhp overhead-valve engine carried over from the

old Hawk MkIV, with modifications to the distributor position to get a lower bonnet line.

The aim had been to build a car with a longer wheelbase (the engine and 'box were moved forward), but that was no larger overall than its predecessor while at the same time being roomier. This was achieved, along with a giant boot. After whitewall tyres and a choice of radios, perhaps the ultimate option (on both the Hawk and Super Snipe) was a divider to create a 'Touring Limousine' for penny-pinching tycoons, with a wind-up privacy glass. Woodall Nicholson did a few stretched limos, plus some hearses for the funeral trade.

The Super Snipe supplemented the Hawk in 1958, using the same body but with suitable chrome embellishments to denote its flagship status – and a heater as standard. It was pitched half a class higher, with an Armstrong Siddeley-designed, 2.6-litre crossflow 'six' making a conservative 105bhp. Not earth-shattering, but almost as much as the old 4-litre 'Blue Riband' engine derived from a Commer truck unit.

The new 'six' was hefty but fairly advanced, with hemispherical combustion chambers, dual valve springs and solid-skirt pistons (with chrome-plated top rings). It grew from 2.6 to 3 litres in October 1959 (as the disc-braked, 95mph Series II, with 121bhp), but never got the alloy cylinder block and seven-bearing crank that were planned developments.

From here the six-cylinder Humber evolved through another three series, memorable changes being the paired headlights on the 1960 Series III (a first on a British car, giving 120W of light on main beam), with an extended front-wing line and full-width wraparound grille. The squared-off roof and rubber bumper inserts came with the 1964 Series V, which, on twin sidedraught Stromberg carbs and a freer-breathing exhaust, was the first true 100mph Humber. It had power steering as standard now, and an alternator rather than a dynamo.

The Hawk never got the quad headlights, but it did gain front discs while at the same time losing its leather seats in favour of PVC – but it got a standard heater at last. Confusingly, the square-roofed Hawk saloons are known as Series IVs, but in all cases the Chevrolet Nomad-like styling of the wagons was unchanged, presumably because volumes were too low to justify the tooling investment.

That even takes into account the widely advertised patronage of various British police forces, which used Super Snipe estates – often painted white, and with their carpets and rear seats removed – as motorway patrol cars.

Estate production figures are elusive; ditto Harold Radford's 1958 Countryman conversion on the Super Snipe, although at £800 I doubt it had many takers. It featured a pull-out picnic table, butane gas stove and washbasin in the boot, plus a hidden spirit case and even a coffee percolator. The front seats became a makeshift bed while the rear squabs folded to extend the luggage area. The rear armrest, meanwhile, concealed a cigarette case and toilet 'requisites'.

'They retain a dignified presence and exude an air of quality. The Hawk's split rear hatch shuts with a hefty precision'



From above: Super Snipe is effortlessly smooth; Hawk's 'four' isn't far behind



'Our' Hawk Estate and Super Snipe were sampled courtesy of the Great British Car Journey museum near Belper, Derbyshire. Both are late and original E-plate examples; the Hawk might even be the last estate built and was sold new to Fenton Atkinson, the judge who tried the Moors murderers.

Riding on 15in wheels, they retain a dignified presence even among modern machinery. Detail features, such as fuel caps that double as reflectors in the offside tail-light clusters and the wagon's pleasingly finished load bay, exude

an air of quality. The Hawk's split rear hatch, suspended by tensioned wires on its bottom half, shuts with a hefty precision.

Beneath their soundproofed bonnets, the engines of both appear simple and logical: generic mid-century analogue engineering. Both are three-pedal manuals with beautifully preserved original interiors. The doors open unusually wide, close pleasingly and have smooth-acting manual window-winders.

Inside, it is hard to see where the Hawk is less luxurious than the Super Snipe, but the wooden



Clockwise from main:
Super Snipe's quad
lights and wraparound
grille arrived on SIII;
subtle fins; chrome
details; eye-catching
kick in the window line



Clockwise from main:
Hawk makes do with
a conventional grille;
stretched script; neatly
curved rear glass -
estate retains its fins;
once prestigious name



door cappings are not so lavish on the estate, and it does without the Super Snipe's rear picnic tables. They both have lots of oddment storage and generous gloveboxes, and there are Rolls-Royce-like sliding door bins in the Super Snipe. The walnut used throughout is genuine but has a glossy, unreal quality. The dashboards are inlaid with Jelly Tot-like, multi-coloured warning lights for choke, main beam and ignition, plus smooth-acting flick-switches and sliders for heating, booster fan and choke. The Super Snipe's green leather smells and looks just right; the Hawk's pristine PVC could have emerged from Rootes' Ryton factory last week.

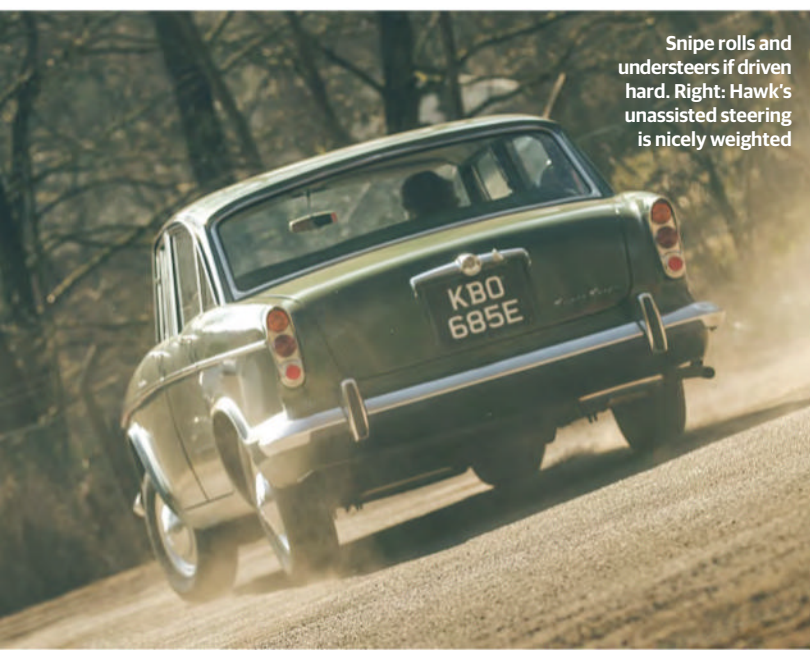
The 3-litre, hemi-head straight-six whisks the Super Snipe effortlessly off the mark up to 40mph, its solid torque giving little cause to use the column gearshift as it eases the car quietly along. There is a soft-edged burble to the Hawk's long-stroke 'four', but the Super Snipe is soothing and almost silent at tickover. In both cases the column shifts have a light, precise action, and both four- and six-cylinder cars will pull away briskly in second. Changing gear is not a chore, although it cannot be rushed.

Cruising at 80mph would have been enough to sweep the Super Snipe past most things in its prime; the Hawk only has another 5mph to go at that speed. Subjectively, though, it doesn't feel that much slower than the 3-litre car.

Servo front disc brakes mean these Humbers pull up efficiently. Even without going very far, or very fast, you sense that both would be stable in a straight line. The manual steering of the Hawk lightens up nicely under way and castors back efficiently; the vague, lightweight assisted helm of the Super Snipe needs coaxing to centre. Both become conspicuous if handled aggressively, with body roll, understeer and audible front-end scrub. Somehow Michael Caine's enthusiasm for the black Super Snipe he drives briefly as a chauffeur in *Alfie* underlines that both car and character are out of step with the newly swinging times.



Clockwise from main: walnut dash is busy with warning lights; door-card armrest; fold-out picnic tables for rear passengers



Snipe rolls and understeers if driven hard. Right: Hawk's unassisted steering is nicely weighted



Yet among those who didn't 'swing', the respect for and recognition factor of the big Humbers remained high: the Super Snipe was favoured by big-band leader Joe Loss (he had one with a record player fitted) and comedian Harry Worth, and was the ministerial car favoured by Harold Wilson. TV appearances in *No Hiding Place* and *The Human Jungle* did not do the respectable image any harm. Disgraced Liberal leader Jeremy Thorpe was still driving his big Humber in the '70s at the time of the Norman Scott affair, but by then the name was becoming a fading memory.

Thorpe's car was an Imperial, incidentally, with leatherette roof and Thrupp & Maberly trim. Hoping to boost interest in its ageing big cars in the face of BMC's Vanden Plas division, Rootes' 1964 Imperial revived a name that had been dormant for a decade on a specially trimmed 'executive' Super Snipe that came

'The range was still selling in healthy numbers in the early 1960s, but the Humbers had already had their best years'

with automatic transmission, power steering, reclining seats and Selectaride dampers.

The range was still selling in healthy numbers in the early 1960s, but they had already had their best years. Hawk sales had peaked at 15,539 between 1957 and '59, but dropped to fewer than 2000 a year towards the end of production. The Super Snipes sold at a steady 6500-7500 a year between 1958 and '65, but sales had dwindled to just over 1000 annually in its final two seasons, when prices were reduced by £104-175 to clear stock.

Waiting in the wings was a generation of younger, sportier luxury cars from Triumph and Rover – plus a raft of foreign marques – that could do with just two thrifty litres what the luxobarge generation needed three to achieve. The plan to build the Imperial and Super Snipe models with Chrysler V8 power reached quite a late stage before the plug was pulled (see *Backfire*, p51). There was a back-up plan for a replacement full-size Humber based on the Chrysler Valiant, but it was deemed more prudent to simply offer right-hand-drive Valiants to the firm's large-car buyers.

For all their transatlantic overtures, there was something very British about the Hawk and Super Snipe that made them so beloved of a certain kind of buyer: a person who would not be fooled by a generic American car wearing this once respected name.

Thanks to Great British Car Journey
(greatbritishcarjourney.com)



Clockwise from below: elegant wire retainers on Hawk's split tailgate; even the boot of the estate is satisfyingly well finished; original PVC trim is still like new



HUMBER SUPER SNIPE SERIES V

Sold/number built 1958-'67/3031 (all series)

Construction steel unitary

Engine all-iron, ohv 2965cc straight-six, twin Stromberg carburetors

Max power 128bhp @ 5000rpm (Series V)

Max torque 167lb ft @ 2600rpm (Series V)

Transmission three-speed manual, RWD

Suspension: **front** independent, by wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs; telescopic dampers f/r

Steering power-assisted recirculating ball

Brakes discs front, drums rear, with servo

Length 15ft 8in (4775mm)

Width 5ft 9in (1753mm)

Height 5ft 1in (1549mm)

Wheelbase 9ft 2in (2794mm)

Weight 3651lb (1656kg)

0-60mph 16.2 secs

Top speed 100mph **Mpg** 16-22

Price new £1495 **Price now** £6-12,000



HUMBER HAWK ESTATE SERIES IV

Sold/number built 1957-'67/41,191 (all series)

Construction steel unitary

Engine all-iron, ohv 2267cc 'four', single Zenith carburettor

Max power 78bhp @ 4400rpm

Max torque 120lb ft @ 2300rpm

Transmission four-speed manual, RWD

Suspension: **front** independent, by wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs; telescopic dampers f/r

Steering recirculating ball

Brakes discs front, drums rear, with servo

Length 15ft 4½in (4686mm)

Width 5ft 9in (1753mm)

Height 5ft 1in (1549mm)

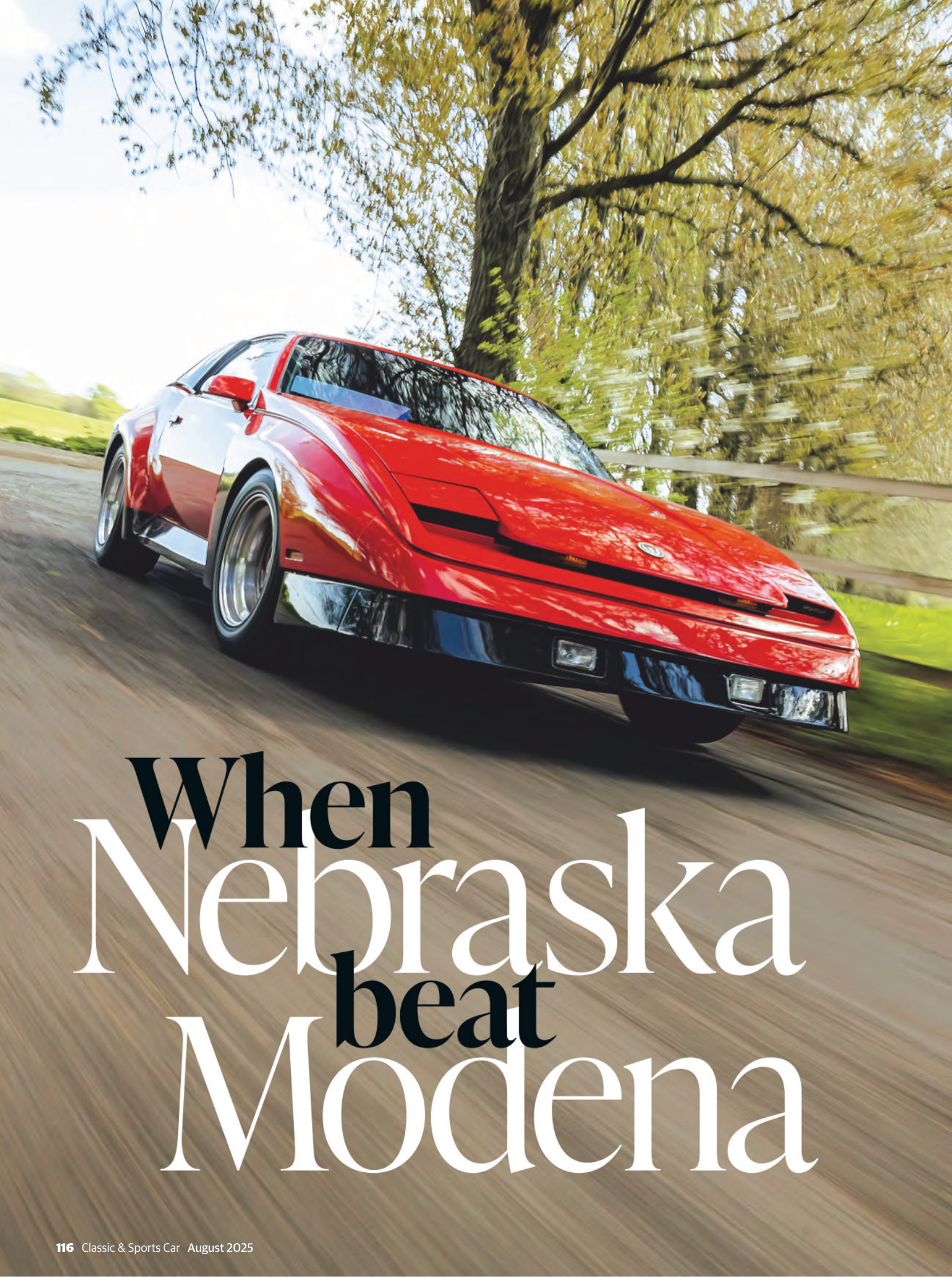
Wheelbase 9ft 2in (2794mm)

Weight 3311lb (1502kg)

0-60mph 25 secs

Top speed 85mph **Mpg** 17-25

Price new £1341 **Price now** £8-12,000



When Nebraska beat Modena



The Pontiac Tojan was
claimed to be the world's
first 200mph production
vehicle. This prototype
is a unique survivor

WORDS **CHARLIE CALDERWOOD**
PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**





Tojan features stiffer suspension, wider tracks, revised front-end geometry and thicker anti-roll bars

“I spoke to Russ Knudsen, the guy who built it, and I called bullsh*t on the 206mph claim,” says Paul Cowland, TV presenter and this Pontiac Tojan’s owner. “At about 140mph it generates enormous amounts of lift. He told me: ‘You gotta drive through it man, don’t be a p*ssy, it sits back down at 151!’” That sentence alone should make it clear that, far from the precision work that took Ferrari to the official 200mph production-car record in 1987 with the F40, this is the mother of all cases of using a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

Knudsen Automotive (which is pronounced ‘K-nude-sen’ according to founder Russell) started out in the late 1970s, building 1930s-aping neoclassic cars based on the General Motors G-body platform, branded as Baroque Motorcars. Success came for a time with four different body shapes, but Knudsen was alive to the fading of the neoclassic trend in the 1980s, while a new fashion for exotic, low-volume supercars was rising. Reinventing the company with the third-generation Pontiac Firebird-based Tojan was his answer.

General Motors gave official support to the project, with select dealers selling the Tojan alongside regular Firebirds as a more exclusive, pricier option. As GM’s sporty marque, Pontiac hoped this model would serve as a halo car, uplifting the reputation of regular Trans Ams, the Fiero and the company’s many badge-engineered front-wheel-drive models. Most Tojans were sold privately, direct from Knudsen, however. And the name? Knudsen’s

high-school football team was the Atlantic Trojans. He dropped the ‘r’ to avoid any confusion with ancient Anatolia.

Knudsen developed the car largely himself, and it’s a lot more than the bodykitted Pontiac it may appear to be at first. Knudsen took in the cars in stock Firebird Trans Am form and stripped them down to their centre sections – roughly the area from the A-pillar to B-pillar, as well as inner wings and the floorpan – and grafted on to that otherwise completely new bodywork. The styling was by Harry Bentley

‘The Tojan was largely built to order. Some boasted Countach-like rear wings, and multiple engines were offered’

Bradley, a GM designer in the 1960s who was better known for his work in the hot-rodding scene, including with the Alexander Brothers, and at Mattel where he designed the first Hot Wheels cars. After the Tojan, Bradley’s most famous life-size creation would prove to be the 1995 edition of the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile, a hot-dog-shaped promotional vehicle.

The car’s body was designed remotely, over a few months, with Knudsen based in Omaha, Nebraska, posting sketches – hand-drawn by

his wife – to Los Angeles, before Bradley returned detailed designs to which Knudsen added. The aim was to create something modern and exotic; that the grille strongly resembles the A70 Toyota Supra launched two years later proves it achieved the former, while a rear deck that is clearly inspired by the De Tomaso Pantera suggests the latter. Glassfibre was used for the bodywork, but the Tojan is far from the flimsy composite plastic components you commonly associate with low-volume sports cars. Lifting the bonnet reveals a thick panel heavier than one made using steel, while the panel gaps are more consistent than those of most steel-bodied GM cars of the period.

Although it was based on the Trans Am frame, Knudsen moved the front suspension pick-up points, changing the front hub alignment, and added greater wheel offset as the car’s track was widened. This gives the Tojan unusual scrub geometry that produces a ‘crabbing’ appearance at full lock and a poor turning circle, but improves the handling. Upgraded dampers and springs completed the recipe, but most examples – if not all – were also built using parts from the Trans Am ‘WS6’ package that included a quicker steering rack, thicker anti-roll bars, a limited-slip differential and four-wheel disc brakes.

The Tojan was largely built to order and could be equipped with a whole host of optional extras; there was no standard model. Some boasted Lamborghini Countach-like rear wings, and multiple engines were offered, although most of the 136 cars built used either



Twin Garrett turbos can tease 800bhp from the 5.7-litre V8, but remedial work is needed to get them back to their best. Right: Paul chanced upon the Tojan during a TV shoot



Neutered performance makes the Pontiac quite manageable on a B-road

the 5-litre 'Crossfire' fuel-injected V8 or the later, 5.7-litre L98. This Tojan, however, is fitted with a much more special powertrain.

"It's one of those amazing things," says Paul. "I found it when I was filming an episode of *Salvage Hunters: Classic Cars*." While shooting a section of the show buying a BMW 635CSi in 2019, Paul spotted the back of the Pontiac peeking out of a nearby unit. Checking it out as soon as there was a break, Paul confirmed what he thought: it was a Tojan. Paul had been a Trans Am fan ever since being transfixed by *Knight Rider* in the 1980s (he also owns a KITT replica) and had read about the Tojan. The fact that he recognised the car piqued the owner's interest. Except it wasn't just any Tojan, but the prototype, the first example built, and one that was said to be capable of 206mph.

Knudsen had met Gale Banks, America's leading turbocharging expert, on the car-show circuit. Banks had set a 'door-slammer' (a car with working doors and thus a stock passenger-car shell) speed record in a C3 Corvette in 1981, achieving 240mph with a twin-turbocharged, 430cu in big-block V8 that was designed for marine use and made in excess of 1000bhp. For the prototype Tojan, Banks supplied one of his intercooled, twin-turbo 5.7-litre marine small-blocks that produced 800bhp on 'pump gas' or 900bhp if fed high-octane fuel.

Knudsen admits he never saw the claimed top speed in the car, but Banks had achieved the figure in modified Trans Ams powered by the same engine. It was feasible, and Banks'

expertise in the field was undeniable. He broke his own record in a third-generation Trans Am in 1987, this time taking it up to 283mph with another twin-turbo big-block. While only one full-fat, Banks-powered Tojan was built, it was listed among the options for the car you could order from a Pontiac dealer – except no one chose to because of its \$62,000 price-tag, similar to a Ferrari 308GTB at the time.

To most US enthusiasts (and thus most Tojan fans), this car was lost for many years, having been exported to the UK in 1985. It turned out

'It hustles along a British back-road pretty well, and the steering is good – far from the American muscle-car stereotype'

Paul was talking to the son of the man who'd bought it back then, and his family had owned the Tojan ever since. "He told me a lovely story," says Paul. "His dad had bought it, looked after it and later passed away. He said he could never sell it and I understood." Paul gave the owner his business card nonetheless. "Then he rang me on my way home and told me I was clearly the guy for it, and offered me a very sensible price. I didn't even know the full story then."

As the demonstrator of everything the Tojan could offer, Paul's prototype has nearly every optional extra the car could be bought with – not just the powerboat engine. Gotti wheels make clear the exotic ambitions, while inside there is Knudsen's own digital dashboard that preceded the Delco LCD item that became optional in the Trans Am in '87 (and was shared with the Opel Monza GSE). As Paul found in this car, it also had an appliqué wooden fascia, another extra offered by Knudsen – but it has since been removed because, unlike the rest of the car, it was in poor shape.

The Tojan is now part of Paul's collection of at least 50 cars, and he admits he has not driven it as much as he'd like. "I'm only just starting to get to know it, really," he says. "But that is the crazy world of collecting. Sometimes you buy cars because they're available and think if you don't buy it you won't get another chance." The Tojan sat among the various Subarus, Saabs, Volkswagens and others that make up the presenter's Nottinghamshire garage for nearly four years before he had time to give it proper attention. "Why I love American stuff so much is you can do that," he continues. "You can put a car away and all you need to do [to get it going again] is change the brake fluid and a few other things. They just always work."

With the help of a jump-pack, the Tojan quickly fires up, its engine rocking from side to side violently with each dab of the throttle pedal. It doesn't sound particularly turbo-like, however – there's no blow-off valve noise or



The Tojan prototype was imported to the UK in 1985 and has been kept in excellent condition. It has since found an equally caring owner in Paul



Clockwise: striking looks; optional Gotti wheels; tidy panel gaps on glassfibre body; LCD dashboard by Knudsen



wastegate flutter. Once out on the road, Paul admits that the compressors aren't running at anything like full pressure, either. "When it was built, it had all sorts of sexy forged internals," he says, "but I think someone has put in lesser parts during a rebuild, just to keep it going." A gauge mounted on the dashboard reveals just a few psi of boost under hard throttle, but most of the time it's running on manifold pressure like a naturally aspirated car.

It's still quick, but it's not 800bhp fast – not even half that – and what boost there is shows just how long these large turbochargers take to spool up. In its pump, the boost of the Banks engine must have hit like a wrecking ball after a long wait climbing the rev range. Powerboat engines tend to spend most of their time at high revs, so lag is not such a problem. "I'd love to get it back to its former glory," says Paul, "but God knows what that's going to cost."

For now, that might be for the best. Knudsen chose not to upgrade the brakes beyond the Trans Am's optional four-wheel-disc set-up, and they would feel woefully inadequate at 200mph. With its current power level, however, similar to how most Tojans were actually made, it hustles along a British back-road pretty well. "It just drives like a very nicely sorted Trans Am," considers Paul. "It's probably the best suspension set-up I've ever driven on one." It's not an uncomfortable car, despite the stiffer springs, and the steering is good, far from the stereotype of American muscle cars. The Tojan reveals further evidence of its high-speed

PONTIAC TOJAN

[twin-turbo version]

Sold/number built 1985-'91/136

Construction glassfibre upper bodywork over steel monocoque

Engine all-iron, ohv, 16v 5001cc V8, electronic fuel injection [5733cc, twin parallel Garrett turbochargers]

Max power 189bhp @ 4800rpm [800bhp]

Max torque 239lb ft @ 3200rpm

Transmission four-speed automatic or five-speed manual, RWD via LSD

Suspension: front independent, by MacPherson struts rear live axle, trailing arms, Panhard rod, coil springs, telescopic dampers; anti-roll bar f/r

Steering power-assisted rack and pinion

Brakes ventilated discs, with servo

Length n/a **Width** n/a

Height 4ft 1¾in (1839mm)

Wheelbase 8ft 5in (1839mm)

Weight n/a (standard Firebird Trans Am 3330lb/1510kg)

0-60mph 7.3 secs

Top speed 132mph [206mph] **Mpg** 25

Price new \$22,000 (1984) [\$62,000]

Price now £15,000+

capability every time you shift into drive or reverse: an automatic transmission uprated for high torque loads grabs the drivetrain quite suddenly and strains the car against the brakes like a young dog pulling at the leash.

It's entirely believable that the car could have done 206mph in 1984. Paul is convinced, and the size of the turbos bolted to the V8, along with Banks' expertise, are enough for me, too. But can you really call it a production car? Did it really beat the F40 to that crown by three years? A handful of Tojan buyers did opt for less extreme forced-induction options, including at least one single-turbo and one supercharged variant, but I struggle to label what is in effect a one-off as a true production car.

What is beyond argument, though, is that the prototype Tojan attracted enough attention that a further 135 were built from 1985-'91, along with 96 Camaro Carallos – a mechanically identical car also built by Knudsen (the Tojan is, to me, the better looking of the pair), this time from the Firebird's Chevrolet sister car. While these are hardly huge numbers, it was roughly to its maker's expectations, and the firm has survived to this day. "I think it was one of the better designs back in that time, when other people were rebodging stuff," reflects Russell today, 40 years on. "We were selling a lot more, and it seemed to attract attention." After decades of European 'hybrids' putting muscle-car engines in low-volume GT bodies, America got a homegrown exotic; like a De Tomaso, but from Nebraska, not Modena.

THUNDER DOWN UNDER

A passion for homegrown muscle cars has led one Aussie enthusiast to gather one of the finest collections of Ford and Holden V8 greats

WORDS RYAN STANDEN PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON DAVIDSON

It wasn't just Ferrari with which Ford was picking fights in the 1960s. More than 10,000 miles away from Le Mans, where GT40s scrapped with 330 P3s for round-the-clock supremacy, another clash was developing on the other side of the world. Mount Panorama was the new battlefield. The 3.86-mile circuit, located a few hours outside Sydney, first hosted a 500-mile race in 1963. The early grids were packed with everyday models, including Ford Zephyrs, Mini Coopers, Chrysler Valiants and Renault 8s. In 1963, Holden brought along the lightly modified EH S4 – Bathurst's first homologation special – but ultimately lost out to the factory-backed Ford Cortina GT of Bob Jane and Harry Firth. A couple of years later, the Blue Oval upped the ante with the race-prepared Cortina GT500, finishing first and second in the 1965 event. Minis dominated the '66 Bathurst 500 before Ford Australia re-established itself at the top of the pile with its new, V8-engined XR Falcon GT.





Robert Rampton with Phase II racing car - green bumper was to differentiate it from the works cars.
Below: one of c260 Holden Torana SL/R 5000s





From top: Falcon GT line, starting with white GTHO Phase III; mighty V8; shaker is in middle of bonnet on Phase IIIs, to the side on I/IIIs



Above: GTHO Phase III was restored after it suffered major damage when its transporter was hit by a bread lorry then a boat fell on it

With the might of General Motors behind it, Holden plotted its revenge. No longer would the Australian manufacturer be embarrassed by its opposition at The Great Race. In a few short years, the Holden vs Ford rivalry turned into all-out war that played out on both Mount Panorama and Australia's streets, with ever-quicker homologation models. The fanbases became tribal and the cars got faster, until the Australian government was forced to step in.

Robert Rampton was one of the young Aussies captivated by the feud between the country's two biggest car makers. "My dad was a Holden man, but I loved the Falcon GTs," he remembers. "I loved the look of them, the power, the stories – everything about them." His first visit to Mount Panorama (known as Wahluu to the local Wiradjuri people) was in 1969. The Bathurst, New South Wales track was, and still is, a brutal challenge. Drivers climb 174m through The Cutting, Quarry Corner and other tricky bends on their way to Skyline, where the circuit peaks at about 880m above sea level, before plunging back down through The Esses and Forrest's Elbow. On the final stretch, the mile-long Conrod Straight, the



Above: models and memorabilia collected over the years. Below: Holy Grail Mustang Boss 429 and 302 with Vincent 'bike



fastest 1960s muscle cars touched 135mph before braking hard for the 90° left-hander that fired them back on to the pit straight.

Our tour of Robert's collection of homegrown muscle begins with Holden's first fightback against the Ford Falcon GT, the 1968 HK Monaro GTS 327. "It has a Chevrolet 327cu in motor," he explains. "They picked the best bits from the American stuff and put it in Australian bodies." The '68 Bathurst 500 was the first year that factory-backed Ford and Holden teams competed against each other with V8-engined racers. The latter triumphed with a top-three lockout, while the closest Ford came seventh. On 5 October 1969, the teams returned to The Mountain and Ford had created something special in its attempt to set the record straight. The XW Falcon GTHO Phase I got a larger, four-barrel carburettor, revised camshafts and more to squeeze c300bhp from its Windsor V8.

The 1970 car in Robert's collection is a little different, though; it's one of about 100 'Phase 1.5' models. "They ran out of Windsor motors for the final cars," he says, "so they used the Cleveland engine, which was meant for the Phase II." Unfortunately for the Blue Oval

teams, Holden had not rested on its laurels for the '69 race, and the Monaro HT GTS 350 used a 5.7-litre Chevrolet small-block to outgun Ford for the second year running. In 1970, it was up to the XW Falcon GTHO Phase II to try to steal Holden's crown. Robert's Phase II is a genuine Bathurst racer. "A dealer [Southern Motors] entered it, and Bruce Hodgson was the driver," he explains. "Bruce was also Ford Australia's works rally driver, so he was well connected and Ford helped him to build the car.

"It only made it about 16 laps before it blew a head gasket; there were eight or nine other GTHOs that had the same problem." Luckily for Ford, the cars of Allan Moffat and Bruce McPhee completed the 130-lap race without any major issues, and the pair finished first and second respectively. Clearly unhappy about a Holden muscling in on its Bathurst 500 podium party, Ford decided to double down with the GTHO Phase III, which achieved a one-two-three finish at the Mount Panorama circuit in 1971. As proof of how far the homologation war had gone between the two Australian giants, consider that the 140mph-plus GTHO Phase III was the fastest

four-door car in the world in '71. Today, the Phase III cars, of which 300 were built, are the most coveted, and Robert's concours-winning example is more special than most. When he got it, a lot of the rear bodywork had been crushed in an accident. "It had been on a truck from Perth to Sydney, but when the transporter stopped for a rest break, another truck ran up the back of it," he recalls. The impact dislodged a boat that was on the transporter, which was pushed into the back of the rare Phase III. "It crushed the roof, rear quarter panels, boot and the tops of the doors – it was a big restoration," Robert continues. "It's the most highly optioned GTHO ever built and the very last one made."

Ford must have felt unbeatable in the early 1970s, but it was all about to come crashing down: Holden had a secret weapon – a young Peter Brock was waiting in the wings – and the Australian government wasn't happy about the high-speed saloons it was selling to the public.

A Falcon GTHO Phase IV was planned, based on the new XA Falcon GT bodyshell, but the project was canned due to Australia's 'Supercar Scare' in 1971. Politicians railed against street-legal Bathurst racers after NSW minister Milton



Ford XY Falcon GT in rare Royal Umber had been in a shipping container for 20 years when Robert (above) discovered it

Morris labelled them “bullets on wheels” in response to a *Sun Herald* newspaper headline that warned of impending 160mph road cars. Uwe Kuessner’s 1971 photograph of journalist (and, later, C&SC editorial director) Mel Nichols driving a Falcon GTHO Phase III at 100mph on Australia’s Hume Highway didn’t help matters. (It was later revealed that the image published in *Wheels* was edited, and the pair was actually travelling at 142mph.) Ford, Holden and Chrysler had to ditch their latest big-engined projects. “This is the next best thing,” says Robert, standing beside his bright-green XA Falcon GT. “When Ford decided it would cut the Phase IV, it had already bought all the parts to build them. It snuck them out the door and put all the gear into 500 Falcon GTs that came out in 1973, and this is one of them. It’s called an



“That brown car I found in a barn in a little country town with a population of fewer than 200 people, in a shed behind the pub”



RPO 83." Robert laments the end of the Falcon's heyday, and his line-up ends with a yellow XB GT. "This is my era, 1966 to '77," he adds.

In the mid-'70s, Holden was one of the first car makers to market with a post-Supercar Scare homologation special – but it was much more difficult for the public to get its hands on. "You had to have a CAMS race licence to buy it, you couldn't just go into a dealership and get one," explains Robert, pointing to the 1974 Holden Torana SL/R 5000 L34 in his garage. "It has a 308cu in motor that was very heavily reworked by engineering company Repco." In 1975, 'King of the Mountain' Peter Brock and co-driver Brian Sampson took an SL/R 5000 L34 to victory at the Bathurst 1000 (the race distance was extended to 1000km in '73). It was Brock's second win at Mount Panorama, which he would conquer a record-breaking nine times.

Robert's set of Bathurst street cars finishes with an unrestored 1977 Holden LX Torana A9X, one of just 100 two-doors built and one of only three in Madeira Red. "The only thing it didn't leave the factory with is the aerial," he says, explaining that the stripped-out Toranas were sold without a radio. "A friend of mine found it in Camperdown, Sydney. He said: 'Don't bother looking at it, just buy it.' I'm yet to see a better one." The A9X's most famous win was at Bathurst in 1979, when Peter Brock and co-driver Jim Richards took the chequered flag holding a six-lap lead over the second-placed Holden of Peter Janson and Larry Perkins. That year, the first eight cars across the line were all Holden Torana A9Xs.

Robert's shrine is decorated with models, memorabilia and photographs of his Bathurst heroes, including of Dick Johnson and Fred Gibson, who have both visited his garage. Although The Great Race is a focal point of this collection, Robert's hoard isn't restricted to homologation specials: a black-and-gold Ford Mustang GT350H, Boss 302 and Boss 429 bring an American flavour, while classic British and Japanese 'bikes represent his other interest.

There are some less racy Aussie muscle cars, too, including the first Robert bought, a Yellow Ochre 1970 Ford XY Falcon GT. "I was ecstatic," he recalls. "I paid AUD\$21,000 for it." It's joined by two more XY-generation models: a Falcon 500 GS ute and a brown Falcon GT. The latter is one of just three finished in Royal Umber. "There were plenty of lairy colours, but no one really went for the 'boring' ones," he explains, while his friend, restorer and employee Greg 'Critch' Critchlow loads it on to a trailer to transport to the Falcon GT Nationals show in Shepparton, Victoria. "I don't work for Robert, we're just good mates – and he pays me," says Critch, who joined Robert's construction firm as a plumber in 2000. Since the pair became more serious about restoring cars a decade ago, they have racked up a few concours awards, including a first-in-class result for the repaired XY Falcon GTHO Phase III at the 2022 MotorEx Car Show in Melbourne. Even so, Robert prefers to play down their achievements: "We're just tradies at the end of the day."

Before Critch trained as a plumber, he took a course in panel-beating, paint-spraying and



From top: two- and four-door Ford Falcon XAs; earliest car in the collection is '68 Holden HK Monaro GTS 327; HQ Monaro GTS 350

GTHO 'Phase 1.5' has a Cleveland V8. Below: Robert's first Falcon, the Yellow Ochre GT, beside the last Holden muscle car, the GTS



upholstery. In the early 2000s, he started working on Robert's small car collection in his spare time – "It'd give me something to do on a rainy day," he says – but Robert eventually hired another plumber and Critch's passion became a full-time gig: "I was ecstatic, because I've never really been a big fan of plumbing."

Bodywork and some components are sent to specialists, but Critch does a lot of the work himself. "Anything I can rebuild, I will," he explains, before describing some of the more intricate jobs he does: "You can't buy original windscreens any more. The remanufactured parts come with a different logo, and you can't have that on a concours car." Instead, Critch skilfully etches the original maker's imprint on to the new 'screen. In his spare time, he works on a 1965 Chevrolet C10 pick-up that Robert bought when the pair visited SEMA in Los Angeles a few years ago, before gifting it to Critch when they were back in Australia. "I really enjoy what I do," Critch concludes. "Unfortunately, Rob has got me doing a bit more plumbing again now, but I can't look a gift horse in the mouth too much."

Our tour ends with a 2018 Holden GTSR. The V8-engined saloon was the swansong for the Australian marque, which shut up shop Down Under in 2017, not long after Ford Australia had closed the doors on its own factories in 2016. Perhaps, one day, they'll make a comeback. Until then, enthusiasts such as Robert and Critch are keeping the stories of their epic battles on The Mountain alive.

Thanks to Robert Rampton; Greg Critchlow; Chris Martin; Warren Brown

TOP TEN

TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

Touring Car racing has long attracted some oddball entrants. Here are our top 10 tin-top iconoclasts

WORDS & IMAGERY **RICHARD HESELTINE**

Touring Car racing in all its many forms has existed for aeons. It was formally adopted in 1958 with the arrival of the British Saloon Car Championship; since then, tin-tops have at times flourished across Europe and beyond, but also foundered – and often due to outside forces pressing in (global recessions, the occasional Fuel Crisis, that sort of thing). What is clear, though, is that some entrants, builders and racers went their

own way by fielding cars that may not have been the most obvious choice of circuit weaponry.

Gathered here are 10 of our favourites. Some blazed trails only to then get burned, while there were those that were foiled before they were halfway out of the workshop. Others, meanwhile, would clearly never amount to much, and then there were those that were but marketing exercises. Here we stick to vehicles that made at least one start and competed in a mainstream championship or event. And, for full disclosure, one of our picks isn't even strictly a car...



1 AMC Spirit AMX

Detroit muscle and European saloon-car racing were once intertwined. However, AMC was rarely represented on track, which made the arrival of the Spirit AMX all the more unexpected. Team Highball built a brace of Group One cars for a tilt at the 1979 Nürburgring 24 Hours, with the likes of actor James Brolin on the driving roster. The net result was two finishes (25th and 43rd), class honours and a legion of new fans. British racer Jeremy Nightingale completed the homologation for the North

Carolina team's bid, and it didn't end there. Nightingale entered a Spirit AMX in that year's RAC Tourist Trophy encounter (pictured). The race at Silverstone was a round of the European Touring Car Championship, the saloon-car stalwart being joined by Team Highball founder Amos Johnson and Les Delano. They didn't go the distance. **Anorak fact** Nightingale started racing aboard a self-built Hillman Imp. His friend, a pre-fame James Hunt, also campaigned it in 1970, albeit only once



AGUTTES

2 Peugeot 806

It may have been a PR stunt, but this racing MPV showed real promise during its sole outing. Built to contest the 1995 Spa 24 Hours, the 806 Procar was conceived internally but prepared by Jean-Pierre Mondron's Kronos Racing squad, which ran the local importer's race programme. Even so, the team had barely a season under its belt when it set about creating this unlikely endurance racer to Belgian national Procar regulations.

The 806 employed the running gear from a 405 Mi16 Supertourisme and the engine from a 306 Maxi tuned to produce 280bhp. Running in the Class II Super Touring category, the 806 Procar lined up 12th in a field of 53 starters, and the all-Belgian driver trio of Philip Verellen, Pascal Witmeur and Éric Bachelart put on a show in the race. This square-rigged device was often on two wheels, but sadly it dropped out with a cooked engine at three-quarters distance.

Anorak fact The 806 Procar was offered at auction in 2022 minus engine and 'box but didn't sell. It's now for sale with Belgian dealer Gipimotor



MERCEDES-BENZ

3 Mercedes-Benz 300SEL 6.8

The precise backstory behind the creation of AMG's *Rote Sau* (Red Sow) is mired in conjecture; it rather depends on whose version of history you believe. This unlikely European Touring Car Championship racer was reputedly built around the remains of a crashed 300SEL, using a new bodysell. The big news was the engine: the 6.3-litre V8 received a displacement hike to 6.8 litres, with power increased from the usual 250bhp to a more useful 428bhp.

There was factory support, even if it was of the back-door variety (there had been previous 300SEL racers, as devised by Erich Waxenberger). To save weight, the bumpers were removed and the glazing swapped for Plexiglas. The doors were also aluminium-skinned. All told, 130kg was saved, even if the car's ready-to-race 1635kg ensured it was no lightweight. The highlight of a patchy competition career was a class win and second overall in the 1971 Spa 24 Hours. As an aside, the Red Sow wasn't always red: it was painted yellow for two events.

Anorak fact Remarkably, a Mercedes-Benz 600 Grosser was also raced. Adrian Hamilton doorhandled his father Duncan's standard road car at Thruxton in 1971



MORO/WIKI

4 Lada 110/Priora

Lada and circuit racing weren't mutually exclusive: witness Satra Motors' involvement in ProdSaloons during the 1970s. However, the marque moved up to the big leagues in 2008 when Russian Bears Motorsport entered a brace of 110s in the World Touring Car Championship for Viktor Shapovalov and Jaap van Lagen (Kirill Ladygin was also on the driver roster, a third car being fielded later in the season). The squad scored no points.

A year later the team gained manufacturer status as Lada Sport and scored a coup by signing James Thompson. The British Touring Car Championship star dovetailed his multi-series programme with six outings in the new Priora model, and he racked up two sixth-place finishes at the Imola round. Lada withdrew from the WTCC at the end of the season. **Anorak fact** Lada returned in 2012, with Rob Huff claiming the marque's maiden win in Beijing two years later, driving a Granta 1.6T

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5 Chevrolet Impala

The urge to say 'I told you so' must have been almost overwhelming; nobody thought it stood a chance. Top-flight Touring Car – or rather, saloon car – racing in the early 1960s was the preserve of Jaguar and Jaguar alone. Except somebody forgot to tell Dan Gurney, who had seemingly rocked up for the 1961 International Trophy support race at Silverstone with only his tow car. But no, this was his entry. A Chevrolet Impala 409? *Really?* After the race, nobody was laughing, least of all Gurney. A wheel had parted company, but not before he had stormed away with the lead from pole, leaving a trail of Jaguars in his wake.

Obviously someone in Coventry read the writing on the wall, because Gurney never got to race the self-financed Impala again: the Chevy was denied an entry for July's Empire Trophy meeting. 'Handsome Dan' even fired off a missive to *Autosport*, railing: 'I will, in time, get over the fact that I spent a lot of time and money bringing the Impala to Great Britain, but I will not readily forget the suspicion that there may have been some behind-the-scenes sabotage to prevent the Chevrolet running again.'

Anorak fact Charlie Kelsey and Peter Sachs occasionally beat up on Jaguars in 1962 with their 327cu in Chevy IIs

ALL AMERICAN RACERS



6 Volvo 850 estate

The BTCC during the Super Touring era was a thing of wonder, with multi-marque grids and big-name drivers aplenty. But perhaps the most memorable car to compete during the '90s was also the most improbable.

Volvo had form in tin-tops – witness the 240 Turbo, which, thanks to a masterstroke of homologation chicanery, starred in the European Touring Car Cup (Gianfranco Brancatelli/Thomas Lindström shared the 1985 driver spoils). TWR, which fielded the Rovers vanquished by the Eggenberger Motorsport Volvos, took charge of the marque's on-track return, the 850 estate being famously adopted for the 'Volvo Back on Track' bid in 1994.

At the time, much was made of the estate outline being adopted because it was more aerodynamic than the saloon, but in reality the decision was marketing-led. Rickard Rydell claimed in later years that he had no idea that he would be racing an estate car when he signed to drive in the BTCC, the single-seater exile having been paired with TWR old boy Jan Lammers. While the Volvos didn't finish higher than fifth that season, they accrued masses of publicity in the mainstream press, which meant that the exercise had been a partial success. Saloons were adopted thereafter, though, with Rydell claiming the 1998 title aboard an S40. **Anorak fact** Rumours persist that two of the four cars were scrapped, but somehow they all survive, if not necessarily in period spec



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7 Tatra T2-603

Scroll back to a time before the previous Cold War thawed and you rarely saw a car from Eastern Europe competing in an international motorsport event; rarer still was a team heading back behind the Iron Curtain with the silverware. Nevertheless, this did happen, as evinced by the works Tatra squad's smash-and-grab raid on the 1965 Marathon de la Route. This gruelling event was staged at the Nürburgring and

encompassed the Nord and Südschleife sections, and it lasted for a patience-bothering 84 hours. The mighty T2s, with their swing-axles and air-cooled V8s slung out back, were paragons of consistency, the Czech machine of Stanislav Hajdušek and Adolf Veřmířovský finishing ninth overall and victor in the GT class. Tellingly, little was made of their success in the British motorsport media at the time.

Anorak fact Tatra returned to Germany 12 months later and bagged a 1-2-3 win in the up-to-2.5-litre class, along with the team prize

8 Ford Fiesta

The appearance of a Ford Fiesta in the Tricentrol British Saloon Car Championship in 1980 wasn't a great surprise, but why a US-spec car? Richard Longman (below, on right) had claimed the title in 1978-'79 with Mini 1275GTs, but a hat-trick wasn't on the cards given the amount of ballast the Minis would have to carry. He chose to go with Ford. Teammate Alan Curnow would run a 1.3-litre car, while Longman opted for the 1.6 class – but such a model wasn't yet homologated in the UK. He decided to race a US-spec edition, which proved gutless, but he accrued points through consistency and took second in class in the British GP support race at Brands. Longman learned of the result in the back of an ambulance – the race was red-flagged after he was caught in a multi-car shunt.

Anorak fact The following season Longman turned his attentions to the Austin Metro



9 Honda N600

This entertaining Japanese tiddler wasn't a natural tin-top racer, but the class divide in Production Saloons in 1972 meant that it was one of few cars eligible for the sub-£600 category.

While Tony Lanfranchi ran away and hid for most of the season in his Moskvich (right), the Yorkshireman endured a rare defeat at Mallory Park at the hands of Bill Sydenham's N600.

The future champion won in the wet to record the Japanese marque's sole victory.

Sydenham also loaned his car to Wendy Markey for her first-ever race that same year. She went on to campaign everything from Ladas to Chevrons.

Anorak fact Martin Thomas, better known for taming Mustangs, Camaros and other heavy metal in the British Saloon Car Championship, also braved an N600 in period (above)

10 Moskvich 412

Tony Lanfranchi always was a canny sort. Back in the early 1970s, production saloon car championships were divided into four classes along the lines of retail cost rather than engine capacity. As such, the cheap-as-chips Moskvich 412 had the largest displacement in its category – and by a significant margin.

Lanfranchi approached the UK concessionaire, Satra Motors, with a view to backing his bid in the Castrol and Britax championships. He subsequently received a free car. Modifications were limited to blueprinting the engine, plus the addition of a rollcage and other safety equipment.

Lanfranchi was virtually unchallenged in 1972, comfortably annexing both titles. A year later, he dovetailed outings in a Moskvich and a BMW 3.0 Si, and remained a contender, but no titles were forthcoming. Further 412s continued to be campaigned by other drivers thereafter, Le Mans veteran Peter Jopp being among their number.

Anorak fact Lanfranchi also used his 1972 Moskvich as daily transport, racking up 17,000 miles in it that same year



A photograph of a yellow Ford Transit Mk3 van parked in a warehouse. The van is in the foreground, angled towards the left. The background is filled with tall stacks of wooden crates, creating a sense of depth and industrial setting. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows.

Boxing clever

The iconic Ford Transit has made an indelible mark on Britain's automotive landscape. Mk1, Mk2 and Mk3 gather for a 60th-birthday celebration

WORDS **TRINITY FRANCIS** PHOTOGRAPHY **JOHN BRADSHAW**





From top: Mk1 and Mk2 shared identical load bays; racking was transferable; side door popularised by the Mk3 was a boon for city deliveries

Picture the vehicle of choice for your stereotypical ‘white van man’, and most likely its grille or bonnet will be adorned with the Blue Oval. Across the model’s 60-year history, the Ford Transit has made an unprecedented impact on not only the commercial-vehicle industry, but also the fabric of Britain. This humble van has become entwined with British culture in a way few products, let alone vehicles, have managed.

From the off, Ford was on to a winner when it released the first-generation Transit in 1965. To better appreciate the significance of the Transit’s beginnings, we’ve assembled first-, second- and third-generation examples to indulge in a nostalgic delivery run back in time. These earlier iterations of Transit set the pace for the ubiquitous van to become an essential part of both business and personal life.

Developed under the codename Project Redcap, the original intention had been to christen the model the V-series. While this would be an obvious ‘does what it says on the tin’ name, a last-minute change landed the new van with the Transit moniker from the earlier Taunus Transit, a German-built model that first appeared in 1953. Since its purpose was to carry goods and people from A to B, it couldn’t have been matched with a more apt label.

Peter Lee, founder of the Transit Van Club, says: “Within months of the Transit being revealed, Ford had orders worth £33million. Bedford actually cancelled a project it was

‘The Transit has made an unprecedented impact on not only the commercial-vehicle industry, but also the fabric of Britain’

working on because the Transit just changed everything. It made other vans on the market look old-fashioned, slow and unusable.”

The attention garnered by this new model was impressive considering the entry-level, short-wheelbase van with a 610kg payload and petrol engine cost just £542. At the other end of the scale, the most expensive option was a £997, 15-seater minibus model, which carried an extra £159 in Purchase Tax.

“The Mk1 revolutionised everything because prior to that, van engines were between the seats,” continues Peter. “It used to get hot inside because you had the engine in there with you – people would burn their legs on the cowlings covering the engines. Ford came up with the V4 engine, which was short enough to be housed in the front engine bay. The revolutionary thing was that you could service it without taking the seats out. It was quite amazing.”

Its groundbreaking mechanicals were just the start: the Transit was wider and more



Anti-clockwise from left: huge wheel and lone speedo in Mk1; Mk2 offered more home comforts; Mk3 cabin is most car-like



Venerable Mk1 changed the game in light commercial vehicles; sliding door set the template, but could be on the draughty side



Facelifted Mk2 sported a considerably more modern front end, but the basic ingredients remained largely unchanged



One-box Mk3 cut a dash with windcheating bonnet line; limited-edition Bonus model came with various options as standard



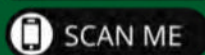
PRESENTS

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FORD TRANSIT Mk1

Sold/number built 1965-'77/422,766

Construction steel unitary

Engine all-iron, ohv 1663cc V4, single carburettor

Max power 73bhp @ 4750rpm

Max torque 91lb ft @ 3000rpm

Transmission four-speed manual, RWD

Suspension: **front** beam axle **rear** live axle; semi-elliptic leaf springs, telescopic dampers f/r

Steering recirculating ball

Brakes Lockheed drums

Length 14ft 6in (4425mm)

Width 6ft 4in (1934mm)

Height 6ft 6in (1973mm)

Wheelbase 8ft 10in (2692mm)

Weight/Payload 2613lb (1185kg)/1907lb

(865kg) **0-50mph** 32.5 secs

Top speed 81mph **Mpg** 17-25

Price new £542 (1965)

Price now £10-25,000

FORD TRANSIT Mk2

Sold/number built 1978-'85/341,942

Construction steel unitary

Engine all-iron, ohc 1593cc 'four', single carburettor

Max power 63bhp @ 5000rpm

Max torque 88lb ft @ 2500rpm

Transmission four-speed manual, RWD

Suspension: **front** beam axle **rear** live axle; semi-elliptic leaf springs, telescopic dampers f/r

Steering rack and pinion

Brakes discs front, drums rear, with servo

Length 14ft 11in (4550mm)

Width 6ft 1in (1855mm)

Height 6ft 5in (1965mm)

Wheelbase 8ft 10in (2690mm)

Weight/Payload 2734lb (1260kg)/2513lb

(1140kg) **0-60mph** n/a

Top speed n/a **Mpg** 20-25

Price new £3966 (1980)

Price now £4-20,000

FORD TRANSIT Mk3

Sold/number built 1986-'94/467,395

Construction steel unitary

Engine all-iron, ohc 1993cc 'four', single carburettor

Max power 77bhp @ 5200rpm

Max torque 108lb ft @ 3000rpm

Transmission five-speed manual, RWD

Suspension: **front** independent, by MacPherson struts **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, telescopic dampers

Steering rack and pinion

Brakes discs front, drums rear, with servo

(plus ABS on some models)

Length 15ft 1in (4606mm)

Width 6ft 4in (1938mm)

Height 6ft 5in (1967mm)

Wheelbase 9ft 3in (2815mm)

Weight/Payload 3410lb (1547kg)/n/a

0-60mph 18 secs

Top speed 90mph **Mpg** n/a

Price new £6000 (1986)

Price now £1500-15,000



car-like to drive than the opposition, and seated three abreast up front with ease. It was capable of some impressive feats, too: in standard terms, the cargo bed could fit two pallets, but in more imaginative metrics, 48 students from Barking College squashed into a minibus, while London Zoo used its Transit to transport two baby elephants.

Although two trunks poking out of the side windows certainly would have been memorable, a more common sight during the '60s was the General Electric Company-branded Transit. "The majority of the vans in '65 weren't sold in white," Peter explains, "black and yellow were the GEC colours." The Fords were sold to GEC in a grey primer before the engineering firm liveried them with its logo and company colours. Due to their eye-catching look and prevalence on the road, GEC vans swiftly became associated with the early Transit and have since been immortalised as die-cast toys.

Driving this 1965 model today gives a clue to just how poor the rest of the vans on the market must have been at the time. The steering is vague at best and requires near-

constant adjustment to give you any hope of remaining on your intended path. There is, however, an inherent robustness and sense of dependability that every other interaction with the vehicle inspires. The clutch bites a little high and braking needs a fair amount of forward planning, but it all feels hugely sturdy and built to last. The beautifully mechanical sensation to the gearlever gives a charming dose of character, too.

Because you can feel every creak of the bodywork and a decent amount of breeze brushing your face, whether or not the sliding door is open, it feels much quicker than it is. While it's painfully slow by today's standards, in 1972 it struck the balance between speed and practicality almost too well – so much so that the Metropolitan Police named it 'Britain's most wanted van'.

A spokesman for Scotland Yard said at the time: "Transits are used in 95% of bank raids. With the performance of a car and space for 1.75 tonnes of loot, the Transit is proving to be the perfect getaway vehicle." Ford never intended it to be used in that way, of course, but you can't buy publicity like that.



More than just a workhorse, the Transit has become part of the street furniture of Britain



THE EVOLUTION OF THE SUPERVAN

SUPERVAN 1

The Transit became best-known for its on-road pursuits, but in 1971 Ford engineer Terry Drury had the inspired idea to create the ultimate marketing tool from it. When the Supervan first graced the track at Brands Hatch, aside from its chunky race tyres, it looked like the familiar panel van. Underneath, however, was a Ford GT40 powertrain, with the racing car's 4.7-litre V8 engine mounted in the back.

Due to Drury's inclusion of GT40 parts, it was commonly thought the Supervan was built on a GT40 chassis, but two-time Supervan owner Andy Browne confirmed it was actually made on the widened frame from a Cooper Monaco racer. Supervan 1 was good for 149mph, spent most of its time on track on three wheels and even lapped the Nürburgring Nordschleife at the 1971 German Grand Prix weekend.



SUPERVAN 2

In 1985 Ford had another crack at the Supervan, this time mounting a Mk2 body on the C100 ex-Le Mans car. Supervan 2 was

powered by a 590bhp DFY Cosworth V8 engine that propelled the vehicle to a recorded 174mph at Silverstone.



SUPERVAN 3

A decade later, Supervan 3 emerged, but by 1995 Ford had got so carried away with its racing ambitions that it needed a Formula

One team just to get it going. Originally the van was fitted with a 650bhp, 3.5-litre engine, but that was later replaced with a 2.9-litre Cosworth powerplant.



SUPERVAN 4/4.2

Supervan lives on today with an electric powertrain capable of 2000bhp. It made its debut at the 2022 Goodwood Festival of

Speed, then Supervan 4 was tweaked to create the Pikes Peak-worthy version 4.2. In this form it also tackled Australia's Mount Panorama and won the 2024 timed shootout on Goodwood's hillclimb.



From top: the Mk1 was ubiquitous in GEC livery; Mk2 shares wheelbase with its predecessor; by the time of the Mk3, 'white van man' was part of British culture



Although the majority of the Transit's responsibilities were intended to be labour-related, Ford leant into its size and adaptability to launch minibus, campervan, kombi and chassis-cab versions, in short- and long-wheelbase forms. Thousands of configurations from pick-up to Luton box van helped the Transit become the *de facto* tool for both work and play. Instead of sticking to one lane and becoming known for campers, the strength of both the leisure and commercial markets cemented the model's staying power.

The Transit's ability to transcend age and social class has been monumental. Just like the Hoover, Tarmac and Tupperware brand names, each of which has become common parlance for the products in which they specialise, today 'Transit' has become the universal term for a four-wheeled workhorse that is compact on the outside and huge on the inside.

Away from the construction site, the Transit has been a loyal companion to countless celebrities, with Brian Poole and the Tremeloes notably among the first to have a '65 Transit to accompany them on tour. Boxer Sir Henry Cooper's family greengrocer business relied on a Transit, and in 1969 popular wrestler Mick McManus even featured in a Transit advert.

In 1976 the model reached its one-millionth milestone, and two years later Ford introduced the Mk2. "By 1978 garages had spent 13 years working on the Mk1, so they were aware of all the components and could service them really quickly because they were so simple to work on," explains Peter. "Behind the seats, the Mk2 was built exactly the same as the Mk1, so shelves and interior racking from the original model would fit in the back of a Mk2."

Mechanical changes included the arrival of the more modern, overhead-cam Pinto engines in 1.6- or 2-litre forms, as used in Ford's passenger cars, adopted in an effort to improve reliability over the previous V4. The cabin was also updated, now featuring more than just a single dial on the dashboard. Peter notes that the idea was to make it feel more car-like – a strategy Ford still employs today.

It may be a placebo effect, but the Mk2 feels a little more communicative than the Mk1. At slow speeds, it's an inevitable workout to pull the wheel around and manoeuvre the vehicle into a parking space. With a huge steering wheel that's more horizontal than vertical, it almost feels as if you're at the wheel of a truck.

While the Mk1's pedals spring up from the floor, the Mk2's are suspended from beneath the dashboard. This means they need to be pressed directly out in front of you rather than down into the floor, making it slightly awkward to move the gearlever at the same time, unless you have unusually long arms. Thankfully, across the ensuing generations the Transit's ergonomics have improved to suit more body types than just burly men of 6ft-plus.

The philosophy for the Mk2 appeared to be 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. Ford had found its groove with its commercial-vehicle offering: the Mk2 was an enhancement rather than a complete – and premature – overhaul. Two

'Ford leaned into its adaptability: thousands of configurations made the Transit become the de facto tool for both work and play'



From top: short, wide 1663cc V4 powers this Mk1; 1.6-litre Pinto 'four' under the bonnet of the Mk2; this Mk3 employs a 77bhp 2-litre incarnation

decades after the model's launch, though, it was time for a much-needed modernisation.

When the third-generation van broke cover in 1986, sitting on the all-new VE6 platform, it was a major shift away from the Transit's traditional styling. The boxy nose was ditched in favour of a sloping, integrated front end for improved aerodynamics. The interior was brought more closely in line with those of Ford's cars of the period, and the noisy cabin was now better insulated and substantially quieter than both previous generations.

By this point the British public was well acquainted with 'white van man' in his Transit. While the third generation was noticeably narrower and easier to handle than its previous iterations, it was still rear-drive and retained an impressive amount of load space. Even though a sliding door was optional from the start of the Transit's run, it was now commonplace to see the van sporting an easy-access side door. "People really appreciated that, especially in London, that you could park and unload the van from the pavement without stepping into the road," says Peter. "If you only have the back doors, you need a couple of metres to unload."

Few classics, save racers, are ragged around quite as much as vans. Classic Transit owners take great pride in their machines, but once a working vehicle has retired from a long, hard life of servitude, the mechanicals underneath have often seen better days. A worn clutch and non-existent brake feel become par for the course, but such foibles give an endearing insight into the vehicle's history.

'Our' 1989 Mk3 is a limited-edition Bonus model, the name denoting a top-value specification including interior features that would normally only be offered as optional extras. The owner of this example has fitted a front bullbar and had the van repainted in 2019, but was mindful to preserve its Bonus decals.

The Mk3 received a facelift in 1994, at the same time adding electric windows, airbags, central locking and air conditioning. Front-end styling was slightly softened, with rounded headlights, and this would influence the design of the Transit as it entered the 21st century.

"It was the first van to feature independent suspension," explains Peter, "and the first with an automatic transmission. To choose a model or one particular thing that has made it stand out more than the rest is impossible, because it always seemed to be at the forefront. The first vans that came out were wheelbarrows, but the latest ones are spaceships. The Transit has moved with the times."

With further iterations landing in 2000 and 2014, keeping ahead of the competition has been a strong thread throughout the Transit's history. The latest models emphasise how the van has transformed into a mobile office that doubles as a weekend adventurer. Forget your overpriced luxury SUVs: no vehicle can handle tools, luggage, bikes, camping gear and the whole family quite like the Ford Transit.

Thanks to Ford Motor Company UK (ford.co.uk); Transit Van Club (transitvanclub.co.uk)

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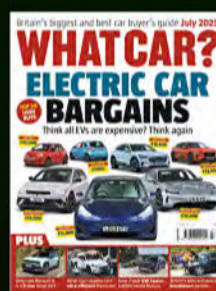


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**SAAB
99 GL**

RUN BY Damon Cogman
OWNED SINCE April
PREVIOUS REPORT n/a

New Swedish addition
at rest after minor
surgery to the fuel
system. Below left:
comfy velour interior
mirrors exterior hue



Which brings us to the main event. After an initial online bid, the auctioneer looked up from his podium and saw me nervously raise my hand. He smiled to reassure me I was making the right decision, and before I had the chance to change my mind, my bid had become the only one and I was now the happy owner of a very brown Saab.

The only problem was, I hadn't planned my purchase very well and, in the absence of a trailer, the decision was quickly made to just drive it home. What could go wrong? Laura jumped in the BMW as support vehicle and we made our way via the back-roads while I settled into my utterly delightful, velour-covered surroundings. The journey back provided a trouble-free drive, with me wafting along pushing strange buttons on the simple dash and sliding levers to work out what does what.

However, this is where the story takes a slight detour. A couple of days later, a lovely warm evening meant a trip to the pub was in order, with Laura in the passenger seat this time. A quick stop at the local filling station was required, but on brimming the tank at the end of my road, a worrying trickle of fuel suddenly turned into a tidal wave of unleaded pooling under

SWEDE DREAM COMES TRUE

If it hadn't been for a keen online rival bidder, you would now be reading about how I'd just bought a Renault Avantime and how I was embarking on an ill-judged foray into weird French car ownership. However, I was eventually outbid on that, and my attention quickly turned to another quirky option of the Saab 99 GL you see here.

As with all non-essential car buying, it wasn't my fault. Fellow fan of Swedish motors Aaron saw this one in an upcoming auction list and quietly forwarded me the details, knowing it would pique my interest in cars of a certain hue.

Having been outbid once, I was relaxed about my chances of success and duly registered my interest with Barons Manor Park Classics. Come sale day, I pointed my Z4 towards the Southampton location on a sunny Saturday morning with my partner Laura as the voice of reason and sounding

board, should the Saab's price start creeping up too high.

On arrival a couple of hours before kick-off, I was reassured by the description matching the car in the (very chestnut brown-coloured) metal. It wasn't perfect, with a few age-related marks, dings and the odd rust spot, but nothing a good polish and paint-

correction session wouldn't be able to improve. The interior was pretty faultless, bar the standard Saab rooflining sagging, with the only blemish being a worn corner of fabric on each front seat. Again, nothing that couldn't be addressed at some point in the future.

Mechanically, there wasn't much to be learned on viewing in the morning, other than starting up and listening to the engine, which seemed to be as it should. A quick once-over revealed there was no previous history because it had been sitting in a barn for a decade before being recently recommissioned for sale. New fuel lines, a brake overhaul, carb rebuild and general servicing all pointed towards a functioning car that wouldn't be too tricky to start using straight away if I bought it.



Collection at Barons Manor Park Classics

the rear end. I watched the flow subside once several gallons had washed down the drain and, after nursing it home, I began thinking my purchase might not be the bargain of the century after all.

I couldn't see where the fuel was coming from, so the only option was to remove the boot carpet and trim, and have a good rummage around the tank and associated pipework. No help there, so it was time to drain the remaining fuel and drop the tank to see what was causing the leak. It turned out that the rubber grommets holding the pipes secure had disintegrated, and were no longer keeping the fuel inside the tank once the level was lifted above half full.

Thinking a call to a specialist would result in a quick fix, this was my wake-up call: Saab 99 parts aren't exactly the easiest things to find, and it would turn out to be a time-sapping exercise from there on in. My simple request for rubber 'top hat' grommets was eventually delivered by Modern Classic Saab in Connecticut, USA. Yep, that's right: four small rubber grommets sent from across the Atlantic, with all the associated shipping costs. Marvellous. This wasn't what I had in mind when I was bidding on my bargain Saab only a few days earlier. Still, it all went back together easily enough and, with a few new hose clips and clamps in place, the tank went back in and the grommets kept the fuel where it should be.

Not the start to Saab utopia I'd hoped for, but I'm optimistic it will improve. Stay tuned for the next instalment, because I've noticed the temperature needle is creeping towards the red in traffic...



Spot the difference: old, perished fuel-pipe rubber and new US replacements



TOYOTA MR2

RUN BY Charlie Calderwood
OWNED SINCE March 2024
PREVIOUS REPORT May

First it was a little hiccup, then a misfire and, before I knew it, the Toyota's engine was slowly cutting out again. It was exactly the same symptoms that caused the breakdown on my way back from Scotland's NC500 back in November. This time I was just an hour from home, somewhere on a dual carriageway, and it was raining heavily. That last point gave me the eureka moment that, I hope, has finally got to the bottom of our failure to proceed last year in the snow.

After replacing all the ignition componentry during the winter, I hadn't encountered the same problem again for months, so it had to be the rain. I searched under the bonnet and soon discovered that the connector on the ignition coil that feeds the distributor was very wet. Just to avoid any doubt about it, the car then gave me a high-voltage zap to confirm it.

Once I had turned off the ignition, which I should have done to start with, I dried the cable, plugged it back in and then wrapped a plastic bag loosely around it with just the ignition wire poking out. After that the car ran perfectly.

I remembered my old Minis used to suffer a similar problem in heavy rain thanks to their poorly placed distributors, just behind the front grille, and I still had a tin of damp-start spray to try and seal the connector from water – but I couldn't believe that

Toyota would have designed the car with such a flaw. There had to be a reason – and that's when I remembered what I thought was an unconnected event when I ripped off a small underbody panel last autumn.

It turns out that this panel is more about redirecting spray away from the engine bay than reducing drag. Replacements of this commonly damaged panel are quite expensive for what is a thin bit of plastic, so I attempted a repair on the old one instead. A small section at one end (and one mounting point) was lost when it was ripped off, but I still had the small piece I'd trimmed.

Working with what I had, I simply smoothed off the cut edges and used super glue that I layered on over two days to

create a thick join that filled in the gap. This restored one of the mounts, while another was

missing a bolt that I've now replaced. However, the third bolt was so rusty that I couldn't remove it, and it had widened its mounting hole on the way off. I went for the authentic JDM option and cable-tied it.

Hopefully that's solved the issue for good, and I've no sour feelings about replacing all those ignition parts, even if that was a blind alley, because they were looking old anyway. The pesky engine warning light has stayed off for well over a month, too, so, in danger of jinxing it, I think the Toyota is all set for summer and a trip to Le Mans.

MEET THE FLEET

AARON MCKAY (Deputy editor)
1972 Volkswagen Type 2 Dormobile
1985 BMW 325i

ALASTAIR CLEMENTS (Editor in chief)
1957 MG Midget ZB
1983 Suzuki Cervo CX-G
2006 MINI Cooper Convertible

CHARLIE CALDERWOOD (Features editor)
1992 Toyota MR2 Mk2
2002 Subaru Forester Sport

DAMON COGMAN (Art editor)
1968 Volkswagen Type 3 Fastback
1982 Saab 99 GL
2005 BMW Z4 2.2i

GAYNOR CAUTER (Contributor)
1965 Jaguar E-type S1 4.2 OTS

GRAEME HURST (Contributor)
1957 Austin-Healey 100/6
1958 Jaguar XK150 OTS
1966 Ford Mustang GT
1970 Citroën ID21 Safari
1973 Volkswagen Brasília
1979 Porsche 911SC
1982 Mercedes-Benz 280TE
1986 BMW 745i

JAMES MANN (Photographer)
1962 Hotchkiss M201 Jeep

JAMES PAGE (Contributor)
1931 Austin Seven saloon
1970 MG 1300

JON PRESSNELL (Senior contributor)
c1933 Austin Seven Special
1964 MG Midget
1987 Renault 4 Savane

JULIAN BALME (Senior contributor)
1932 Ford Roadster
1940 Lincoln-Zephyr Continental
1954 Lincoln Cosmopolitan
1957 Ford Ranch Wagon
1962 Triumph TR4
1964 Ford Falcon Sprint
1964 Ford Galaxie 500
1967 Triumph Spitfire MkIII
1970 Lotus Elan +2

LIZZIE POPE (Associate editor)
1965 Ford Mustang

MALCOLM MCKAY (Contributor)
1959 Rochdale GT
1961 Morris 1000 Traveller
1967 Jaguar E-type S1 4.2 2+2
1969 Marcos 3-Litre
1973 Jaguar XJ6 S2 4.2
1973 Volkswagen Brasília

MARTIN BUCKLEY (Senior contributor)
1960 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud II
1962 Chevrolet Corvair 700
1966 Oldsmobile Toronado
1970 Lancia Flaminia Berlina
1970 Renault 16 TS
1972 NSU Ro80
1974 Fiat 130 Coupé
1978 Lancia Gamma Berlina
1981 Range Rover

MARTIN PORT (Contributor)
1934 Austin Seven Special
1958 Land-Rover Series One 88in
1959 Land-Rover Series II 88in

MICK WALSH (International editor)
1949 Lea-Francis 14hp Sports
1967 Alfa Romeo Duetto

PAUL HARDIMAN (Senior contributor)
1972 Ford Escort Mk1

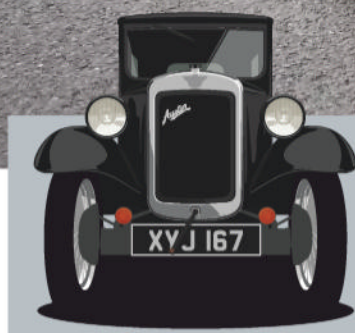
RYAN STANDEN (Editorial assistant)
1976 Reliant Scimitar GTE

SIMON HUCKNALL (Senior contributor)
1977 Fiat 128 1300 CL
2009 Mazda MX-5 2.0i

SIMON TAYLOR (Editor at large)
1937 Bentley Gurney Nutting Sedan
1950/'56 HWM-Chevrolet
1961 AC Ace 2.6
1969 Chevrolet Corvette



The Seven has been plodding along without asking much of anyone. Right: tiny footprint means it takes up little space



AUSTIN SEVEN

RUN BY James Page
OWNED SINCE August 2019
PREVIOUS REPORT May 2021

Discovering that my previous report on the Austin was all the way back in 2021 came as a bit of a surprise. It's had a pretty busy time since then and has, for the most part, run faultlessly. There was a fuelling issue that meant it would cut out every quarter of a mile or so – basically, once it had used up a carburettor's worth of petrol. This was traced to a problem with the fuel tap and was solved by leaving it permanently in the 'open' position, then fitting a new tap further along the line.

Dad and I bought the line jointly in 2019, and since then it has mainly lived either with him – sometimes being parked alongside his more recently acquired Riley 9 – or with a friend of his. Both are local to me, and while Dad was having a new garage built, the Seven had a stint living with me and took up almost no space in my garage. Last winter, however, it went into storage at a TVR specialist just up the road, sheltering from the weather while surrounded by various Chimaeras, Cerberas and Griffiths.

We retrieved it the day before Dad was due to take part in a tour celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Bristol Austin 7 Club. The 60-mile route comprised three

sections, with the choice of doing any or all of them. Dad decided to do the first section from Burrington in Somerset to Newton St Loe. That was a distance of only 20 miles or so, but with



Burrington being about 30 miles from home, it meant an early start.

The car had been fully greased before being put away, and all that was needed was to charge the battery, check the tyre pressures and change the oil. It then ran perfectly down to Burrington and on to Newton St Loe, but when it got back home again, there was water running down the radiator side and a drip off the petrol pipe into the carburettor.

The latter came away in Dad's hand when he tried to tighten it up, but fortunately the pipe was



From left: club meet in Luckington; 'planes and cars' day out in Westonzoyland

long enough to allow him to refix it. The water was coming from the overflow in the header tank: the overflow pipe had broken away from the tank and required a soldered repair.

The only other thing that has been needed over the past couple of years has been a new battery, sourced from BBL Batteries in Bristol. The firm sells batteries for everything from commercial vehicles to golf buggies: not only was the Austin listed in BBL's catalogue, but it also had a unit in stock and ready to go.

Slightly longer drives have included an 80-mile round trip to a 'planes and cars' day with the Morgan Three-Wheeler Club. Getting to the wonderfully named

village of Westonzoyland involved using the A38, and the Austin was perfectly happy cruising along at 40mph. It then went further afield with a 140-mile round trip to Presteigne to watch the Vintage Sports-Car Club's Welsh Trial. A carefully chosen route using quiet roads resulted in a beautiful drive up the Golden Valley in Herefordshire, then crossing the Whitney toll bridge near Clifford.

The local Austin 7 Club branch has its regular pub lunches in Luckington, which involves a nice cross-country drive including a steep hill near Hawkesbury Upton, and no doubt more of those will be on the schedule through the summer. One thing the car seemingly won't be doing is taking my daughter to her school prom: I suggested it, but the idea was met with a diplomatic silence. Shame.

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Left: Flaminia Berlina for sale – would suit enthusiastic competent mechanic. Below: fresh stainless exhaust would work better if fitted



LANCIA FLAMINIA BERLINA

RUN BY Martin Buckley
OWNED SINCE March 2021
PREVIOUS REPORT March 2024

There is such a thing as ‘a car too far’, and undoubtedly for me this Flaminia Berlina is it. I can’t even remember why I bought it in the first place and, having had a series of complete numpties working on the poor thing, I have rather lost my appetite for doing much with it. I might have been swayed by watching the 1965 psychological thriller *Psyche 59*, fancying myself as a bit of a Curd Jürgens: he drives one of the very few right-hookers in the film as a slightly pervy Harley Street psychologist.

Sitting down to write this report is really the first time I’ve thought hard about the Lancia in months. The sad thing is that it is quite a nice car with a lot going for it, including a sound body, mostly half-reasonable paint, new tyres and exhaust, a refurbished fuel tank and many other things. Unfortunately, the to-do list is, for me, overwhelming. Yes, I heard the engine running just the once and it sounded okay, and I might just be able to free the gear linkage with copious amounts of WD-40. But that is the extent of my skillset.

In the same way that I should be a great photographer given the number of C&SC photoshoots I’ve



Lancia has a lot going for it, insists Buckley. Below: rear quarter-windows won’t open



attended, then I should be a fine wielder of spanners given my exposure to people who know what they are doing working on my cars. Except it hasn’t quite worked out like that: I can tinker and refit interior trim and other little bits, but when it comes to the technical stuff I dither between either lacking the courage to get stuck in, or knowing just enough to be dangerous. Either way, the end results are rarely edifying, although I have occasionally surprised myself.

The brakes have been ‘done’ at least theoretically (with a new, aftermarket remote servo), but I have yet to sort a thermostat housing or fit the stainless-steel exhaust, heater trunking and fuel tank. The ignition key appears to have gone missing, and who knows if things such as the wipers (front and rear), lights and so on work, because the switchgear isn’t wired in; likewise the vacuum-operated rear quarter windows. I wouldn’t know where to begin



Aftermarket brake servo does the job

to refit the instruments. I had an early disaster when the wind caught the bonnet and bent the hinges, and somehow it has all been downhill ever since.

There are a few possibilities on the horizon, but, having just spent an hour going through the boxes of parts and weighing up what is missing and still needs to be done, I’m not feeling optimistic – and particularly so given the needs of my other vehicles, which all work and can be driven.

So I guess this is a ‘please buy my car’ piece. I will happily swap it for something, particularly a Lancia of a similar ‘60s ilk, or if I can get £6000 for it, along with all the spares (including doors, bonnet and bootlid, plus an engine and transaxle) then, with some regret, it can go. I’m sure it owes me plenty more than that, but I’d rather not add up the invoices. Since when did it matter what something owes you?



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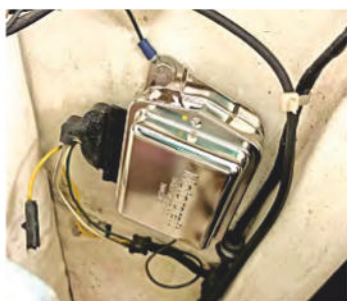
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The Mustang's voltage regulator was replaced, but the gremlins continued

It's been a frustrating five or so months, during which period delivery drivers have covered many more miles bringing parts to repair the Ford than the car itself has completed. It began, spookily enough, last Hallowe'en, when an attempt to commute in the Mustang was thwarted. It started, but then the V8 cut out when the headlights were turned on. With the pressures of a working day, the car stayed in the garage and a modern undertook daily duties.

Initial investigations revealed a very poor earth around the nearside headlight. The area was checked and cleaned, after which everything worked fine, but the alternator light stayed on. Was it a problem with the alternator? No: tests bypassing the voltage regulator confirmed all was well.

So what about the regulator itself? This was replaced, but it made no difference. Following more head-scratching, an email went to model specialist Mustang Maniac, who had supplied the regulator: would the team there check that the replacement part was okay? The part was sent back, tested, deemed fine, returned and refitted. Helpfully, Mustang Maniac also shared diagrams of the model's sharedbonnet wiring. Everything looked to be correct, albeit a bit tired, so the next step



**FORD
MUSTANG**

RUN BY Lizzie Pope
OWNED SINCE October 2017
PREVIOUS REPORT Nov 2024



Above: cat's cradle of melted wires has been fixed. Below: old (on left) and new (right) under-dash wiring looms. The electrical refurb is complete

was to replace the wiring loom under the bonnet, as well as the extension to the alternator. This involved a few modifications.

First, in order to be legal for driving in the UK, it had to work with white sidelights mounted in the headlight unit, rather than using the orange indicators, as it would in the USA. There was also a problem with the headlight-bulb connectors, because the LED upgrades in the car have slightly longer fittings, so they had to be swapped over. After all of that investment in time and effort,



Ignition switch was well past its best, so a replacement has now been fitted

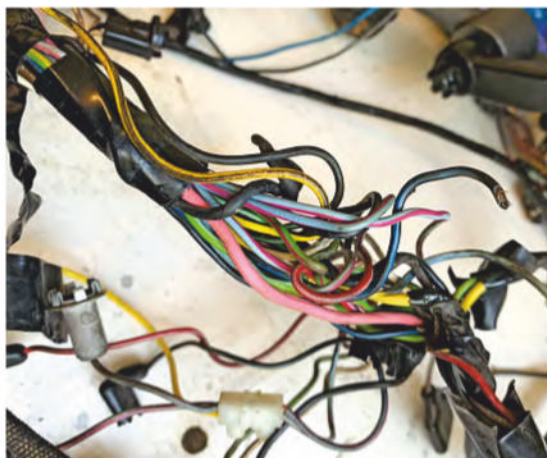
everything looked much tidier – but the problem persisted.

Further investigation found that although the Mustang's alternator light shouldn't be earthed, it appeared to have a very good earth. Then, as some insulating tape was peeled back, it revealed melted wiring. Could this be at least part of the issue?

The next job was to replace the main under-dash wiring loom, during which the ignition and light switches were found to be in poor condition – so they were replaced, too. Work to the interior fan switch means that the cabin heater fan now has three speeds, rather than the all-or-nothing previous set-up. Plus the foot-operated main-beam switch was cleaned and at last received the cover it has been missing since we bought the car.

The result? Finally, it works. That's not to say that everything does: the indicator lights on the dash no longer illuminate when the turn signals are on, but you can (just about) hear them ticking. For now, we can live with that. A test drive and oil change later, and we were ready to go.

Since then, the Mustang has had a fair bit of use. As well as a run to the Goodwood Members' Meeting, it has been used for commuting and local pub trips (thank you to those who showered compliments upon it), and served as the most glamorous car at our local garden centre one bank holiday. Here's to plenty more summer fun.



Outings included trip to garden centre

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Clockwise from main: halcyon days on the road with the restored TR; balanced 'four' is now up to 2138cc; a leather retrim is on the cards



TRIUMPH TR3A

OWNED BY Keith Fox
FIRST CLASSIC Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato
DREAM CLASSIC 'Blue Train' Bentley Gurney Nutting Coupé

'This car is a keeper, and the restoration is of a quality rarely found'

RESTORED TR3A IS A TRIUMPH

My first old car was a Volkswagen Beetle, but back in the '70s it wasn't yet cherished, just an everyday hack. So my first proper 'classic' would have to be my Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato, but even that was my daily transport at the time.

I have been an enthusiast from a very young age, and have been fortunate to own myriad classic cars, from a 1928 Rolls-Royce 20hp tourer to a 2015 Ariel Atom 3.5/245. My current collection includes a Mazda MX-5 30th Anniversary Edition, a 1949 MG TC and the car in question here, my 1957 Triumph TR3A – a model I have wanted to own for quite some time.

A few years ago I was keen to build my dream garage, but the local authority didn't agree with the plans so I had to scale back my aspirations a touch. The result was a garage that could hold two small sports cars, albeit one on top of the

other with the aid of a four-post parking ramp, making just enough space underneath for my TR.

This TR3A, according to the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust Certificate, was built on 24 December 1957 in Coventry. It was a left-hand-drive car bound for export to the USA, where it was registered in 1958. The only American history I have for it is a certificate of title from North Carolina for a Michael Ray Corbin,



dated 4 August 1975. It was then sold to the Beverly Hills Car Club Inc, from where it was purchased as a non-running project. The TR eventually came back to the UK in September 2018, ready for a full nut-and-bolt restoration.

As of 12 March 2023, the original reconditioned odometer showed 30,530 miles – the point at which the restoration was completed and the car put back on the road.

I have now been working on and restoring cars for more than 40 years. I started tinkering with them when I was 15, and attended – and displayed cars at – various shows from the age of 18, but I'm now at an age where I prefer to enjoy the fruits of another's labours. This car is a keeper, and the restoration is of a quality rarely found. Since taking delivery of the car, I have replaced the painted wire wheels with a set of chrome 72-spoke items and fitted stainless-steel bumpers, and I'm about to add a set of cone K&N-style air filters – I don't want to run a newly built engine with open trumpets. It also has a few non-original, upgraded period parts on it.

The plan is to use the car as much as possible, but I do try to avoid bad weather. I have always aspired to own a classic

vehicle restored to this superb standard. The car is brilliant to drive and easily keeps pace with modern traffic. The engine has been uprated to 2138cc, balanced and breathed upon. Future jobs include changing back to steel wheels (wire-wheel cleaning is a punishment, not a pleasure). I may even retrim it in leather, because upholstery is one of my things.

I regularly display the Triumph at both regional and national car shows, and I hope to attend the local TR Register meeting soon as a new member of the club's 'Red Rose Section'. I was fortunate to take part in a local show three days after purchasing the TR. It was on display among 160 or so well-presented classics and drove away with the Best in Show trophy – testament to the skills of Adrian Salisbury, who did such a lovely job with the restoration.

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Courtney and Joy Newman's ModernWay sells era-defining design, from art and lighting to furniture and period hi-fi

Below: 1968 Cadillac Eldorado is a one-off convertible with a custom cabin and phone (bottom)



COURTNEY NEWMAN

The Californian conservator of mid-century Modernism with an eye for classic cars

WORDS MARTIN BUCKLEY PHOTOGRAPHY PAWEŁ LITWINSKI

Courtney Newman, as well as being one of the founder members of the Palm Springs Modern Committee back in 1999, owns a shop selling mid-century furniture and related interior-design objects on the city's North Palm Canyon Drive. There are literally dozens of vintage-themed stores in this southern Californian desert conurbation, but Courtney and Joy Newman's ModernWay is considered to be one of the best. It has now been running for more than two decades, as an outlet for homeware, appliances and accessories dating from the 1950s, '60s and '70s.

The development of the area is linked to Hollywood's golden era and the 'two-hour rule', which stipulated that actors could not take themselves further than two hours from the studio to which they were contracted in case they were needed back on set for last-minute filming duties. The dry heat of the Coachella Valley Palm Springs is exactly one hour and 50 minutes east of Los Angeles.

"Most of the glamorous mid-century houses around here have a complementary classic car on the driveway," says Courtney, "particularly during Modernism Week in February." Certainly, 1950s and '60s cars – from Detroit iron to Euro exotica – are routinely spotted among the city's modern everyday traffic.



Although it is most strongly associated with Frank Sinatra and his Rat Pack cohorts, from the 1930s onwards the area became a favoured hideaway for every Hollywood star you could care to name. Even today it remains a free architectural feast: you can drive down almost any residential street and spot a house where the likes of Elvis Presley or Steve McQueen once lived. Most are grand 'Desert Modernism' style: a large, open-plan footprint, lots of glass (to blur the lines between indoor and outdoor living) and a flat or 'butterfly' roof.

These stylish buildings demanded the latest in clean-lined interior furnishings, and today that's where Courtney and Joy can help out, be it with an Eames or Nicoletti lounge chair, some Pierre Paulin Tulip bar stools or perhaps

a Raymond Loewy-penned valet set – the French-born industrial designer was one of Palm Springs' most celebrated inhabitants.

One of the automotive landmarks of the area is Courtney's 1968 Cadillac Eldorado, which can be found parked outside the couple's business premises every working day. This giant, two-door luxury car was the first front-wheel-drive Cadillac and the most exclusive of its day. Being a '68, it still has the hidden headlights but also front disc brakes and the bigger, 7.7-litre engine. Moreover, it is possibly unique in that it is a convertible: there were no official factory Eldorado ragtops until the '70s.

"I've owned it for 23 years," says Courtney. "We had a shop that did conversions through SEMA do it, but they are gone now. It has a reinforced frame, a full electric convertible top – rarely raised in this climate – and a redesigned windshield frame with chrome pillars to match the convertible roof in the correct style."

"The interior is also custom, with aluminium inserts on the door panels and dashboard." The red phone on the centre console is straight out of a James Bond-spoofing Derek Flint movie.

Courtney and Joy also sell period lighting and vintage hi-fis. The only thing in this fascinating Modernist emporium they won't sell you is his ex-Dean Martin '60s rotary phone. "He's my hero," says Courtney. Of course he is.

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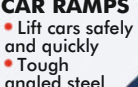


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Country Lane Tours

South Coast & Isle of Wight



This event follows the normal *Country Lane Tours* format of leisurely scenic driving routes with visits to varied attractions along the way.



After spending the day at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, home to fascinating exhibits including Nelson's Victory, the Mary Rose and much more, we take the short ferry to the Isle of Wight.

The tour stays for two nights, visiting various interesting venues, including Osborne House, Queen Victoria's favourite residence, before crossing back to the mainland.

The Master Builder's Hotel, situated in picturesque Buckler's Hard Village (pictured top) on the Beaulieu estate, is the base for the next four nights. In addition to taking in the delights of the New Forest we are, of course, visiting the National Motor Museum, our cars having a reserved area within the complex itself.

There's not enough space to list everything on the tour so for full comprehensive schedule & **FREE** dvd of a previous event email your name and postal address to countrylanetours@gmail.com or call Ian on 01824 790280 for a chat.



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Rardley Motors, Surrey; 01428 606616; rardleymotors.com

Finished in red with cream hide and red Wilton carpets, this exceptional non-ABS example has been known to Rardley Motors for 31 years, having been sold by the firm twice before. An impressive 33 services and 24 MoTs support the mileage of 68,000 (or 1751 miles a year), as well as complete ownership history from new to today. Sold with its original factory service book, handbooks, leather wallet and toolkit, this is one of just 260 non-ABS models officially imported by Maranello Concessionaires Ltd, of which approximately 170 remain. **£64,990**



ADVERTISING FEATURE





Ferrari F40 Competizione fetched €2.3m at Broad Arrow's Villa d'Este sale. Right: 550 Barchetta and striking BMW M1



BROAD ARROW LANDS IN COMO

For its inaugural auction held during the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este weekend (p12), Broad Arrow's 24-25 May event at the nearby Villa Erba estate produced a remarkable reflection of the show cars in its 71 lots.

Saturday's sale was devoted to BMWs, a nod to the prevailing theme at the lakeside venue that included a large display for the 50th anniversary of the 3 Series. As something of a warm-up for the main event, the top lot was a 1980 M1 modified to Procar spec in period, which achieved €602,500. A white M1 road car and a 1958 507 remained unsold, but the one-off 1982 635CSi Observer Coupé that has been long searching for a new

home was offered with no reserve and finally found one for €16,100.

A spirited bidding war unfolded for the 1948 Ferrari 166 Spyder Corsa in Sunday's sale, with five busy phone lines driving figures north from the €3million opener offered up by auctioneer Thomas Forrester. Quarter-million-euro



Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith by Vignale sold for €126,500

increments were stacked in quick succession before two bidders commanded a quieter, slower approach from €6m until the hammer came down at €6.7m (€7.53m with fees).

Villa Erba's dome hosting the sale was packed with spectators, along with a very busy bidders' enclosure, but Thomas had his work cut out to drive demand beyond the sale's star lots. Even the 1938 Talbot-Lago T150C Figoni et Falaschi Teardrop Coupé suffered a slog up from €1.5m to €3.5m on the hammer, well short of its €4.5-6.5m guide.

Likewise the unusual, ex-Targa Florio 1966 Abarth-Fiat OT1300 with periscope intake that found just €394k against a €400-450k estimate; the 1939 Lagonda V12 Rapide drophead coupé with a €568,750 sale from a

€6-700k guide; and what Thomas called "extraordinary value" as the bids stopped at €400k for a 1973 Porsche 911 Carrera RS Touring.

Pre-war cars appeared to suffer while the modern classics soared, with a stark contrast between a 1933 Mercedes-Benz 170 Roadster with an opening bid that fell from €60,000 to €50k, for a final sale of €63,250, and the excitement generated by a 15,806km 2003 Honda NSX-R that had been the previous lot. Bidders in the room and online battled from €350k all the way to €934,375 with fees, right at the top of its €750-950k guide.

RM Sotheby's, the past auction partner with Villa d'Este, had no better luck in Milan for its 22 May sale, with a total of €16.5m – half that of Broad Arrow's €31m – and many lots not reaching their reserves. Its highest result was a 1971 Lamborghini Miura SV, changing hands for €3.9m, while €1,298,750 for a 1987 Porsche 959 Speedster conversion and a quirky 1954 Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith by Vignale taking €126,500 were notable. Left unsold were a 1932 Alfa Romeo 8C-2300 Lungo Cabriolet, a 1953 Cisitalia 505DF and a 1955 Abarth 207A Spyder.

HISTORY REGISTER INTRODUCED

A database of classic cars' histories has been launched, initially as a tool for auction houses to augment their own research, but with ambitions to expand into the wider market in the near future. The Classic Car Register is related to two long-established companies in other industries, The Art Loss Register and The Watch Register, which were founded in 1990 and 2014 respectively.

This new online platform is designed to build a complete picture of a car's provenance and provide greater transparency for valuations, while also highlighting issues of fraud and theft.

"Historic files aren't digitised by most auction houses," says Julian Radcliffe, chair of the CCR. "So we have a mobile team that is starting

to go around and do this. We are also appealing to anyone who has any old auction catalogues to please send them to us."

In the future, the platform will be extended to restorers and collectors, but searches on cars will always be tracked. By the end of this year there will be a team of four managing the CCR, currently led by former Getty editorial vice-president Hugh Pinney. The Art Loss Register has 50 research staff, but this new car division has already deployed its database to help locate a stolen 1977 Ferrari Daytona and to fill in gaps in the 1959 Ferrari Thin Wall Special's history.

"We do a lot of work with insurance companies with our other divisions," says Julian, "but we simply provide the information. In the art world, we don't do authentication. If it's stolen we'll go and investigate, but if it is a fake, then we'll suggest they go to specialist authenticators."



MONTEREY ROLL-CALL

Gooding & Company will once again host its annual Pebble Beach auction alongside the famous Concours d'Elegance, taking place this year on 15-16 August.

Early consignments are led by a '61 Ferrari 250GT SWB California Spider (above right), estimated at \$8-10m, as well as a '58 250GT TdF that's expected to find \$4.5-5.25m. Highlights will also include a pair of Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadsters, a 1952 Jaguar C-type, a 1962 Alfa Romeo Giulietta SZ Coda Tronca

and the 1965 Shelby Cobra 427 Competition CSX3011, originally purchased by Formula One racing driver Moisés Solana Arciniega and which starred in the 1966 Elvis Presley movie *Spinout*.

In nearby Carmel and Monterey, rival auction houses will also host blockbuster sales. Broad Arrow kicks off on 13-14 August at the Monterey Jet Center, with a 1957 Porsche 356A Carrera GT Coupé Lightweight attracting an estimate of \$900,000-1.2m.

During its 14-16 August sale, and alongside its usual suite of rare Chevrolet Corvettes and Ford Mustangs, Mecum Auctions will offer a 1930 Packard 745 Deluxe Eight Dietrich Convertible, a 1951

Lincoln Cosmopolitan Club Coupe, a 1958 Chrysler California Ghia and an intriguing 1940 Special built by dry lakes racer Eugene Von Arx for his son (above left). Fitted with a 221cu in flathead V8 and George Riley overhead-valve heads, it reportedly hit 114.4mph at El Mirage dry lake bed in '42.

On 15-16 August, RM Sotheby's is set to sell a Ferrari F50 and two F40s, plus a 1968 Alfa Romeo T33/2 that competed at the 24 Hours of Daytona, the Nürburgring 1000km and the Targa Florio. The Alfa carries an estimate of \$1.7-2m.

Bonhams|Cars will return with its familiar Quail Lodge fixture on 15 August. A 1924 Bugatti-Diatto Avio 8C, the 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing displayed at the Geneva Salon and a 1958 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham all feature.

LOTS TO WATCH



Mercedes-Benz 380K

Rare 1933 Cabriolet comes from long-term ownership and has no reserve at Manor Park Classics on 19 July.



Jaguar E-type S1

Ex-Prince Michael of Kent, Germany-delivered 1965 E-type fixed-head is guided at £130-150k on 19 July for Historics.



BMW-Hartge H5SP

Hampson Auctions will offer this 268bhp, 190k-mile, period-tuned 5 Series at its 27 July sale, guided at £40-60,000.

RESTOMOD RESIDUALS RISE

Increased demand from the USA and the Middle East has helped bolster residual values for restored, modified and often electrically converted classics, a panel of industry experts concluded at the Historic & Classic Vehicle Alliance's Heritage Matters day, held at Bicester Motion on 3 June. Eagle founder Henry Pearman explained the longer waves of the market from a modernised Jaguar E-type perspective: "We've seen a shift in demand for restorations that can last a generation, that people only have to do once. Finance firms will fund up to 95% of the cost, and because we still haven't built 100 cars, ours often resell for more than they cost."

Tim Fenna, founder of uprated MG specialist Frontline, agreed: "We've had a couple of finance companies approach us with rates better than for a new Porsche or Ferrari, which surprised us, and cars coming back from

our existing clients are often marketed with us for more than the original build price. And 80% of them now go to America, which is waking up to what we do [left]."

Trends are similar at Jaguar Land Rover Classic, where head of commercial Jon Chester said 50-60% of all vehicles built go overseas. He added: "We still get options to



buy cars back. Earlier customers get as much as 85% of their money back."

Patrick Fairfield, head of commercial at Lunaz Cars, which was founded in 2018 and now offers five British classics in electric form, said: "Often clients from the USA and the Middle East are self-described 'point and shoot' buyers, who want to skip the queue. But we won't allow customers to have two of the same spec, and we are keen that people return to us when they want to sell, because we're at the front of the market. We've seen growing brand equity in restomodding. People are spending £650k on a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud, which is beyond what used to be normal."

AUCTION DIARY

JULY

8 RM Sotheby's Taplow, Berkshire rmsothebys.com

9-10 Hobbs Parker Online (UK) hobbsparker.co.uk

9-12 Mecum Auctions Kissimmee, FL, USA mecum.com

11 Bonhams|Cars Goodwood, West Sussex cars.bonhams.com

12 Barons MPC Southampton, Hampshire barons-auctions.com

12 Tennants Leyburn, North Yorkshire tennants.co.uk

13 Webb's Auckland, New Zealand webbs.co.nz

14 Donington Auctions Cheltenham, Victoria, Australia doningtonauctions.com.au

19 Historics Datchet, Berkshire historics.co.uk

19 Manor Park Classics Runcorn, Cheshire manorparkclassics.com

19 WB & Sons Killingworth, Tyne and Wear wbandsons.com

23-26 Mecum Auctions Harrisburg, PA, USA mecum.com

26 Spicers Goole, East Yorkshire spicersauctioneers.com

27 Hampson Auctions Oulton Park, Cheshire hampsonauctions.com

27 Richard Edmonds Auctions Showell, Wiltshire richardedmondsauctions.com

30 H&H Buxton, Derbyshire handh.co.uk

30-1 Mathewsons Online (UK) mathewsons.co.uk

30-6 Historics Online (UK) historics.co.uk

31 SWVA Holton Heath, Dorset swva.co.uk

AUGUST

2-3 Dore & Rees Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire doreandrees.com

6 Brightwells Leominster, Herefordshire brightwells.com

9 Barons MPC Southampton, Hampshire barons-auctions.com

13-14 Broad Arrow Monterey, CA, USA broadarrowauctions.com

14-16 Mecum Auctions Monterey, CA, USA mecum.com

15 Bonhams|Cars Carmel, CA, USA cars.bonhams.com

Details correct at time of writing - please check that sales are on before visiting venues



Buckley's deals on wheels

On visiting a specialist, be they strangers or old friends, I always look in the skips (I found a Jaguar E-type bonnet in the last one I checked) and the 'graveyard' area around the back. I'm just about to take an Alfasud into protective custody that I found languishing in the 'dead-car park' of a Jaguar specialist, looking lonely and out of place.

And rusty, naturally. But, given that I have never owned one and there was a space in the Dutch barn (next to the Rover 2000) that would be a perfect fit, then why not? It was taken off the road at 17,000 miles because of an issue with the engine (timing-belt-related) and then left in the corner of a not-very-watertight barn. It's a fairly early black four-door with chrome bumpers and a tidy interior. At a quick glance it requires front wings and a front panel, and probably a lot more (it appears you can get most bits for Suds), but it needs saving even if I'm only an intermediary. I'm assuming the survival rate of Sud engines is quite high, given how quickly the bodies dissolved.

About 15 years ago I found one advertised in Cheltenham. It was just about on the road, but looking crusty everywhere. I had a rare moment of clarity and walked away, even though I was getting the impression the vendor would have virtually given it to me *gratis*.

Looking at this one, I think the rust issue was as much to do with the thin gauge of the steel

as the lack of corrosion-proofing, which was part of the reason the things went so well. When I first joined C&SC, Mick Walsh was running an Alfasud Sprint with the 1.7-litre engine that went like the clappers, but had the worst driving position and torquesteer of any car I've ever encountered.

I suppose I'm drawn to almost anything with a horizontally opposed engine – Lancia Flavias and Gammas, Jowett Javelins – because I like the idea of the inherent balance, and the fact that you can get the weight nice and low down in the car. I guess they have died out because of cost (with two cylinder heads), and for the simple reason that you can get in-line engines to run just as smoothly now with balancer shafts, electronics and clever mountings.

As for the Rover 2000, that car has recently rather blotted its copybook because the clutch has died, probably due to a failed slave cylinder. Meanwhile, I am steeling myself for the thankless task of selling all of the car parts I'm never going to need, such as a perfectly good Volvo 240 rear door, a set of MGC/TR5 wire wheels, plus some aftermarket alloys that came with the manual Mercedes-Benz 230CE that W123 guru Mark Cosovich is currently reviving for me. There are also various Range Rover bits including an incorrectly ordered repair panel still in its wrapping and the top half of the rear door. Feel free to make me an offer!



Sweet, low-mileage Alfasud is rusty (inevitably), but looks well worth saving

AUCTION RESULTS

May's top 50 worldwide sales



\$990k for copper-bodied show Shelby



Rare Nissan Fairlady Z432R, ¥55.5m

PRICE	CAR	SALE
£13,423,200	2001 Ferrari F2001	RM Sotheby's, Monaco
£6,336,750	1948 Ferrari 166 Spider Corsa by Ansaloni	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£3,311,700	1971 Lamborghini Miura SV	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£3,029,250	1938 Talbot-Lago T150C Lago Spéciale Teardrop Coupé	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£2,964,500	2014 Ferrari LaFerrari	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£2,366,700	1989 Ferrari F40	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£2,032,800	2015 Bugatti Veyron Grand Sport Vitesse	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£1,942,500	1989 Ferrari F40 'Competizione'	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£1,470,000	1954 Siata 208S Motto Spider	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£1,327,200	2010 Lamborghini Reventón Roadster	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£1,281,000	1965 Ferrari 275GTS	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£1,260,000	1990 Porsche 911 (964) by Singer	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£1,090,950	1954 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£1,090,950	1987 Porsche 959 Speedster	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£949,200	1962 Ferrari 250GT Cabriolet Series II	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£949,200	1989 Lamborghini Countach 25th Anniversary	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£846,300	1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£784,875	2003 Honda NSX-R	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£762,300	1965 Shelby Cobra CSX4000 Series	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£646,800	1965 Aston Martin Short-Chassis Volante	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£621,600	2019 Ford GT Carbon Series	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£506,100	1980 BMW M1	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£477,750	1939 Lagonda V12 Rapide James Young Drophead Coupé	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£477,750	2007 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren 722 Edition	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£477,750	2018 Mercedes-Maybach G650 Landaulet	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£453,075	1972 Ferrari 365GTB/4 Daytona	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£445,200	2002 Ferrari 550 Barchetta	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£416,250	1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series V	Hampson Auctions, Tattenhall, Cheshire
£406,560	1996 Ferrari F512M	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£383,250	1964 Aston Martin DB5	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£383,250	1973 Porsche 911 Carrera RS 2.7 Touring	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£383,250	2012 Porsche 911 (997) GT2 RS	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£373,800	1973 Ferrari 365GTB/4 Daytona	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£373,800	2006 Mercedes-Benz CLK DTM AMG Cabriolet	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£331,275	1966 Abarth-Fiat OT1300	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£321,860	1970 Plymouth Road Runner Hemi SuperBird	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£320,775	1994 Jaguar XJ220	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£319,200	1970 Plymouth Road Runner Hemi SuperBird	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£313,390	2005 Ford GT	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£311,325	2006 Mercedes-Benz CLK DTM AMG Cabriolet	RM Sotheby's, Milan, Italy
£302,400	2005 Ferrari 575M Superamerica	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£294,000	1971 Alfa Romeo GTA-R by Alfaholics	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£283,745	2019 Ferrari 812 Superfast	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£283,696	1966 Jaguar E-type by Woodham Mortimer	Hampson Auctions, Tattenhall, Cheshire
£283,050	1972 Nissan Fairlady Z432R	BINGO, Tokyo, Japan
£279,300	2005 Ford GT	Broad Arrow Auctions, Cernobbio, Italy
£275,275	2016 McLaren 675LT	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£262,570	2005 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren	Mecum Auctions, Indianapolis, USA
£260,400	2011 Porsche 911 (997) Speedster	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA
£256,200	2006 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren	Bonhams Cars, Miami, USA

Excluding cars under five years old. Exchange rates correct at time of sale; prices include buyer's premium. For more, see classicandportscar.com



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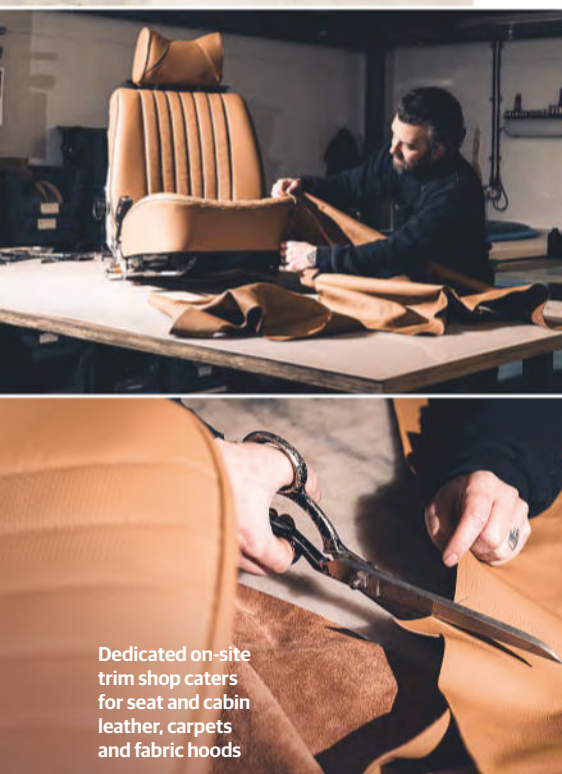
Above: gearboxes are rebuilt in-house. Right: SL Shop is now the only UK firm able to service Bosch's mechanical fuel-injection pumps



Rolling road is essential for proper set-up of the injection pumps, here on a W111 220SEb Cabrio



SL Shop's extensive facilities include storage for customer cars or just hardtops, alongside workshops



Dedicated on-site trim shop caters for seat and cabin leather, carpets and fabric hoods

TOP OF THE SHOPS FOR CLASSIC MERCS

A lifelong love for SLs has evolved into a thriving business that caters for all aspects of ownership

WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

Sam Bailey started the SL Shop almost 20 years ago. It has since moved at least twice, and today it has more than 15,000 customers on its books. Sam grew up helping his late father work on Pagodas, W108 saloons, and W111 coupés and convertibles, so it's safe to say that he is fairly steeped in the marque. He is the go-to man for anything R107 SL-related, from routine servicing to full restoration, at his 30,000sq ft facility just outside Stratford-upon-Avon.

The 107-series is still such a usable everyday classic that upgrades are popular. "Electronic ignition and throttle bodies on the V8s improve the throttle response, and mean we can change the cam and map the ignition," explains Sam. During our visit, at least one customer was throwing money at a full-blown restoration of a 450SLC in the fabrication shop, and even the R129 from the '90s is beginning to have its day. "We're servicing a few 129s," says Sam, "but it's hard to get the right customer. R129s can get expensive out of proportion to their worth – they can get a bit crusty underneath because of a lack of underseal above the rear axle."

Sam has, of late, gone back in time to refocus the efforts of his team on earlier SLs and related models. He says: "The skillset is all about the Pagoda now, and we have tried to bring all skills in-house. We recently bought Tower Bridge Diesels, so we are now the only company in the UK doing pumps for the Bosch mechanical injection – you don't have to run the risk of posting them to Germany or Poland."

"The pump itself is quite large, like a baby engine. There is a little camshaft in there, but it's all about the pressures: broken springs inside cause problems, yet the most common issue is when people mess with them who don't know what they are doing, so they go

out of calibration. You also see a lot with seized thermostats: they suffer from lack of use, with no oil circulation, which causes them to seize."

A test and report on a pump is £320, a rebuild is £2373, and the SL Shop also offers the service to Porsche 911 2.0E and Aston DBS V8 owners. "We fully strip, aqua-blast and replate them," says Sam. "They are set to factory spec and bench-tested, then you have to tweak them a bit once they're back in the car. They are dependable as long as they are maintained and used: on early ones the oil was separate from the engine, and it didn't always get changed. It had its own sump on the 230SL and 250SL: they fill up with fuel and start scoring."

The SL Shop is rebuilding engines in-house now (if not doing all the machining work), along with both manual and automatic gearboxes. "We couldn't find anywhere that would do them," Sam says. "We rebuild the diffs as well because, again, we struggled to get anyone else to do it. They get noisy and the pinion bearings go. We give them new bearings and replate them." Converting automatic SLs to manual transmission is another on-site service, alongside more routine offerings such as detailing and pre-season health checks.

The SL Shop now supplies parts for all SLs through to the R230, plus most other 1950s, '60s and early '70s saloons and coupés. Parts supply from Stuttgart can be inconsistent, Sam notes, but there are usually solutions: "We're lucky to have good contacts for parts in Germany.

Anything else we get made."

Sam reckons one of the biggest problems is getting people to use their cars: "We want to get people into them and have adventures. One guy who bought a Pagoda from us puts 12,000 miles on it a year. On the flipside you have the customer who got us to restore his 280SL to beyond perfection, but he can't bear the thought of it getting wet or scratched, so he keeps it in a glass garage."

The knowledge

Name SL Shop
Address Units 1a, 2, 3 and 4b,
 Drayton Farm Buildings,
 Drayton Manor Drive, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 9RQ
Specialism Mercedes SL sales, service and restoration
Staff 40 **Prices** £127/hr
Tel 01789 337070
Web theslshop.com

VOLKSWAGEN TYPE 3

VW's first bid to extend its range from the Beetle has largely vanished, but it makes a sound classic buy

WORDS MALCOLM MCKAY PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES MANN



In 1961 the Beetle had 1192cc and had only just received an all-synchro 'box. It had been immensely successful, but nobody imagined it had decades more life in it. And Volkswagen wanted to expand beyond the economy bracket, in search of greater profit margins.

The recently redesigned crankcase and stronger crankshaft with more space between the cylinders was to allow greater displacement. The new Type 3 1500 made the most of this more powerful engine, shared with the Karmann Ghia coupé. Using a wider rear track and more rounded body on the Beetle's wheelbase allowed for more interior space. With the fan on the crankshaft instead of the generator shaft, the engine was lower, making an estate version possible (the Variant, or Squareback), and giving all models luggage space front and rear. Also unveiled at the '61 Frankfurt show was a delightful 1500 Cabriolet; sadly, Karmann built only a dozen prototypes.

Styling was modern and more conventional, yet still cheerful. The engine air intake was tucked below the rear window on the saloon, known as the Notchback, followed in 1965 by the rakish Fastback. Sharing components with

the Beetle kept costs down – the suspension used many of the same parts – while softening the ride with a wider rear track and a front anti-roll bar gave more civilised handling. The engine and rear suspension were mounted in a separate subframe, rubber-bushed to the shell to aid refinement and reduce noise.

The 1500 was complimented for its comfort, high gearing and fine driving position. With 61% of its weight over the rear wheels (63% on the Fastback), rapid progress in crosswinds could be scary, but the ride and handling were otherwise good, with light, precise steering.

A twin-carb engine with 20% more power came in 1963, followed in '65 by the 1600 and the Fastback bodyshell, with front discs across the range. Interior trim was upgraded but still simple by British standards. Performance was also modest – this was a stylish family car, not a sporting saloon – but for its feeling of quality and durability it was unsurpassed.

The Type 3 range pioneered electronic fuel injection in 1967 as the first mass-produced cars fitted with the Bosch D-Jetronic system. The Type 3 didn't match Beetle production numbers, but sales of around three million worldwide was a success by any standards.

TROUBLE SPOTS

RUST The biggest enemy: check all box-sections and spot-welded joints in the platform, front axle tubes (especially around welded joints), floor and body where joined, bottom of A/B-posts, inner sills, jacking points, rear seatbelt lower mount area, rear suspension subframe, crossmember and mounting points on the body, front and rear bumper mounts, inner/outer wheelarches, front wings (double-skinned from 1969), door bottoms, spare-wheel well, roof gutters, rear inner wings (view through vents, see right)

TRIM Type 3-specific hard trim is scarce

ENGINE Look out for oil leaks, overheating, cylinder-head cracks, heavy breathing

TRANSMISSION Check for weak synchros and watch for jumping out of gear

STEERING Ensure no excess play or stiffness

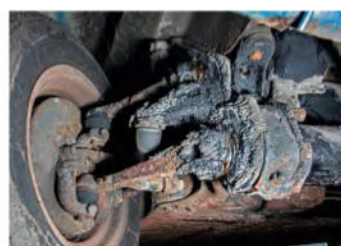
BRAKES Watch out for seized calipers/slave cylinders, and check hose condition



Credited only to VW's in-house design team, the Type 3 brilliantly hid its Beetle origins and shared componentry within a range of curvaceous and spacious bodies



Driving a Type 3 is all about Volkswagen character: it sounds and feels like a classic Beetle, but in a more civilised form: quieter, more powerful, more stable and more relaxed at cruising speeds. The driving position is comfortable, and the Type 3 offers a great deal more general space and elbow room, especially in the rear



Check steering and suspension for play and signs of regular greasing. The 1600 had disc brakes: check calipers are free and flexi-hoses not failing from inside



The front boot usefully supplemented the rear on all Type 3s. Spare-wheel well and front wings are all rot-prone: this level of originality is very rare to find



Seat covers and carpets are obtainable new, but most of the other interior and exterior trim unique to the Type 3 is now obsolete: completeness is the key



Shine a light inside the side vents to check for hidden rot - it will tell you a lot about the condition of unseen panels behind a shiny paintjob

An impressive packaging exercise, the Type 3 flat-four is just 18 inches tall and fits neatly under a decent-sized boot area. Access is challenging for some components such as spark plugs, and many cars have lost their original air-filter boxes. Oil is easily checked, with the dipstick located in the hatch/bootlid closing aperture



Type 3 shared Beetle's wheelbase and many components, but pushed VW's offerings slightly upmarket

Before you buy

Durability was Volkswagen's watchword, but after 50-60 years of use, the engine will need a rebuild if it hasn't had one already. Look out for oil leaks and fumes, smoky exhausts, a lack of power and poor starting: all are signs of a rebuild being necessary. The parts are available and mostly not expensive, but the labour can add up. The same applies to the transmission: watch for leaks, difficult selection, jumping out of gear and worn synchromesh.

Fuel-injected cars are often converted back to carburettors because of the cost of injection parts and expertise. Once right, however, they should give decades of trouble-free service, so it's worth the investment.

The suspension is simple but needs checking for wear. Many Type 3s have been lowered – it's easy to wind the torsion bars back up, but check that damage hasn't been sustained by too-low riding. All-drum brakes up to 1965 will fade if worked hard; front disc systems are better, but check for seized calipers and slave cylinders. Parts are available, but late calipers are costly.

In addition to the vital checks for rust and originality (see previous pages), test the door hinges for wear: the heavy doors can drop.

Around half a million Type 3s were built in Brazil, and some in Australia. Many of those examples have found their way around the world, so, if you're offered a car with unusual features such as twin headlights, it may well be an overseas variation. Values are generally similar, but check specifications carefully.

OWNING ONE



"I bought this Fastback in 2006 from its original owner," says VW devotee **Rich Oakley**. "It had been his daily driver from 1965 and he was in his 90s. He had fitted new front wings, and a very good respray was done

in 1992, but it's otherwise completely original, with 116,000 miles. It may well be the oldest surviving Fastback – certainly the earliest right-hand-drive example. I love it; it's a 100mph car – the running gear is not unlike a Porsche 912.

"My dad bought a new Beetle in 1972 and I have always loved Volkswagens. I've owned more than 100 of them – Beetles, campers, trucks. I still have a 1947 Beetle, a 1952 cabrio and the last UK cabrio in my collection. The next job on the Fastback is to change the ignition switch – the switch fitted for the first year of production was very fragile, and it's failing now, but I managed to buy the last new one in existence: it cost me £400!"

"It had new wings and was resprayed, but is otherwise completely original – I love it"

ALTERNATIVES



SAAB 96 V4 1967-'80, c407,500 built
Quirky but popular two-door saloon/estate, with 1498cc Ford V4 and front-wheel drive, developed from the Beetle-rivalling two-stroke. Seven seats at first in the 95 estate; costly to restore. **Price now** £2-18,000



FORD CORSAIR 1964-'70, 294,591 built
A gap-filler between the Cortina and the Zephyr, with a 1500 at first then a 1.7/2.0 V4. Two-door, four-door and rare Estate. Bigger but no roomier inside, and even more rot-prone. **Price now** £2-12,000



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THE KNOWLEDGE

TIMELINE

1961 1500 Notchback launched
1962 Variant enters production
1963 'S' with twin-carb, high-compression engine, uprated trim and chrome
1965 1600 TL Fastback added: upgraded trim, reclining seats, twin carbs; single-carb 1600/1500 also available; all get front discs
1966 All models uprated to 12V electrics
1967 1600E for some markets: Bosch D-Jetronic injection, dual-circuit brakes
1968 Three-speed ZF automatic option on all twin-carb 1600s; trailing-arm rear suspension for most markets
1969 Facelift: thick 'Europa' bumpers, longer nose, bigger tail-lights
1971 Early 411 calipers, detail trim changes
1973 Production ends

FACTFILE

Sold/number built 1961-'73/2,566,857 (Germany) **Construction** steel platform chassis, bolted-on steel body
Engine magnesium-crankcase, iron-barrels, alloy-heads, ohv 1493/1584cc flat-four, with single/twin Solex carbs or Bosch D-Jetronic injection **Max power** 48bhp @ 3800rpm to 54bhp @ 4600rpm **Max torque** 72lb ft @ 2000rpm to 81lb ft @ 2800rpm
Transmission four-speed manual or three-speed ZF automatic, RWD
Suspension: front trailing links, transverse torsion bars, anti-roll bar rear swing axles, torsion bars; telescopic dampers f/r (double-jointed driveshafts, longitudinal/diagonal arms from '68) **Steering** worm and roller
Brakes drums, or discs front, drums rear
Length 12ft 4in-13ft 11in (4225-4370mm)
Width 5ft 3in (1640mm) **Height** 4ft 10in (1470mm) **Wheelbase** 7ft 10½in (2400mm)
Weight 1890-2282lb (859-1035kg)
0-60mph 26-18.5 secs
Top speed 77-86mph **Mpg** 22-35
Price new £1198 (Fastback, 1968)

CLUB

VW Type 3 & 4 Club
 vwtype3and4club.org.uk

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Classic Volks classicvolks.com
Bughaus bughaus.co.uk **Notch 1500 VW Parts** ebay.co.uk/str/notch1500vwparts
EvaResto evaresto.co.uk **The Flat Four Workshop** theflatfourworkshop.com
Aircooled Technic aircooledtechnic.co.uk

WHAT TO PAY

Resto/Average/Show

Notchback* £1500/5-8000/14,000
Variant** £1750/5500-8500/15,000
Fastback** £2250/6-9000/16,000

OUR VERDICT

Superb build quality and durability mean that many Type 3s have endured decades of sub-standard maintenance to become utterly worn out – and they can be costly to bring back to health as a result. Survival rates are low because many were broken for spares. Search far and wide for the best-preserved car you can find, with minimal corrosion and complete brightwork. Check the engine spec is correct, along with the interior trim.

FOR

Rarity, practicality and all the character of a Beetle with more space, refinement and pace. Running gear is available and affordable

AGAINST

With so few left, used non-mechanical parts are scarce. Some trim is almost unobtainable, as are body panels. Rust can make restoration prohibitively expensive



CAUGHT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS

Tempted? Here are two examples available to buy now

VW 1600 VARIANT

Year 1970 **Recorded mileage** 50,000
Price £12,000 **Vendor** Lee Fox, Strood, Kent (private sale); 07940 732660
For Period colour; RHD; fine overall order
Against Bubbling on front wings needs catching



Described by the vendor as 'very clean inside, outside and underneath', this RHD Variant was first sold in Australia and looks excellent in its local Honey Gold hue. The paint was refreshed during a recent restoration, when the underside was resealed and the window rubbers replaced, plus a fresh headliner; the original seats and brightwork look excellent. The reconditioned engine wears twin Webers, while the shape suits its ride-height drop and period roof-rack.

VW 1600 TL FASTBACK

Year 1973 **Recorded mileage** 94,000km
Price €22,000 **Vendor** Lisbon Classics, Lisbon, Portugal; 00351 964 014 758; lisbonclassics.com
For Superb condition; stylish wheels
Against Top of the market



This very late Fastback, for sale in Portugal, presents superbly with its pale metallic blue repaint complemented by wide, styled-steel wheels. Being a 1973 car it has the less attractive later-style interior, but the black trim appears both very original and in fine order, with a set of rustic overmats and a period Blaupunkt radio. Both the front and rear luggage areas, and the engine bay, look very clean, and it's described as 'impeccable' by the vendor.

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28,000 miles. Grigio Silverstone Bordeaux hide. Daytona seats. FSH. Supplied new to Formula 1 World Champion Jenson Button.
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1968 Fiat 2300 S Coupe £25,950
LHD Blue with burgundy leather. One of the last built. Netherlands registered with title docs. Can be UK reg. Exceptional condition.



2005 Bentley Arnage. £36,950.
Fountain blue. Cotswold hide. Piped French navy. One owner. 34,000 miles only. Many special features. FSH. Mint condition.



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Classified pick

Our favourite cars you can buy this month



AIRSTREAM CARAVANNER 'S'

Year of manufacture 1957 **Recorded mileage** n/a
Asking price \$42,500 **Vendor** Hyman Ltd, St Louis, Missouri, USA; 001 314 524 6000; hymanltd.com
WHEN IT WAS NEW
Price \$3769 **Max power** n/a **Max torque** n/a
0-60mph n/a **Top speed** n/a **Mpg** n/a

Yes, I know it's not a sports car – or even a car – but it's definitely a classic, so for me an Airstream qualifies for these pages. And particularly a 1957 Airstream Caravanner 'S', the 'lightweight cruising model' created, its maker claimed, to offer 'bold, adventurous trailering [for the] young at heart'.

'Lightweight' in Airstream terms is relative, but in 1957 only the 18ft Wanderer and 16ft Bubble were shorter, and its 2800lb (1270kg) weight means you'll need a tow vehicle of around 1500kg to haul it safely if you're following the '85% rule' advocated by the UK's two main caravanning clubs. Even better, how about Lizzie Pope's choice this month (p178)? At 1685kg and with a torque-rich Lycoming V8, the fabulous, streamlined Cord 812 would make an ideal partner for the polished-aluminium Airstream, which should be easy enough to tow with its shock absorbers and built-in brakes. And even if they are a few years apart in age, the design of America's most famous caravan dates back to the early 1930s, after founder Wally Byam evolved his first 'travel trailer' (essentially a tent mounted on a Ford Model T chassis) with a teardrop-style aluminium skin.

The advantage of going for something slightly later is a slew of mod cons. It's hard to believe this caravan is nearly 70 years old when you look inside, where you'll find a well-specified kitchen with sink, fridge/freezer and a four-ring cooker with oven that's bigger than the one in my first flat. The comforts don't end there: there's a butane heater, proper insulation, a wardrobe, a fully equipped washroom with flushing loo (I might be tempted to invest in an overhaul here) and a concealed sink that converts into a vanity unit.

The bedroom/bathroom area, with fixed 'Airfoam' double bed, can be closed off for privacy, but most of the time it is a single room, made even more airy by the huge 20sq ft 'Panoram' window, which should fill the living space with light on sunny summer tours – or, as Airstream's brochure put it, give you 'a kaleidoscopic view of all outdoors'. The sofa in the front of the van can be folded down into a second double for visitors or kids.

Having spent much of its recent time in a museum, this Airstream is in wonderfully original condition, but it feels to me as if this kind of machine should never be a static exhibit. It should now be hitched up to a suitable tow car, pounding the highways in search of new sights and new horizons.



SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Alastair Clements
FOR Fabulous looks, relatively compact size and original condition
AGAINST Some of the interior might need updating for regular use
WHY SHOULD I BUY IT?
 Because it offers a slice of Airstream style at a weight that makes it a realistic proposition for towing

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1969 MGC GT



Overdrive, black leather, nut and bolt restoration, beautiful! **£25,995**

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Aston Martin DB9 2008 74000 km
52 100 Euro



Jaguar E-Type 3.8 Coupé 1964
P.O.A



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Jaguar E-Type V12 Roadster 1973
62 000 Euro



Rolls Royce Silver Cloud III 1964 Very nice
original condition 46 500 Euro



Porsche 911 Carrera 1986 82000 km EU
specification 72 900 Euro



Porsche 912 1968 57
200 Euro



Porsche 944 Convertible 1990
21 700 Euro



Porsche 928 S4 1987
P.O.A



VW Karmann Ghia 1600 Convertible 1971
29 800 Euro



Corvette C1 Convertible 1958 Restored
2024 inside and out, LHD 95 500 Euro



Lancia Beta Zagato Spider 1978
12 900 Euro



Ferrari Testarossa 1988 55000 km
P.O.A.



Corvette C3 Stingray 1971 4-speed manual
P.O.A



Datsun 280 Z 1978
28 300 Euro



Mercedes AMG GT C 2017 16500 km
P.O.A



Ford Thunderbird V8 Convertible Continental
kit 1956 34 700 Euro



Corvette Grand Sport "Collector Ed" 2017
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Studebaker Avanti II V8 1988 Only 73 cars
produced 20 600 Euro



MGA 1600 Coupé 1960 Very nice
condition 21 580 Euro



Alfa Romeo Spider 1974 New paint 2025
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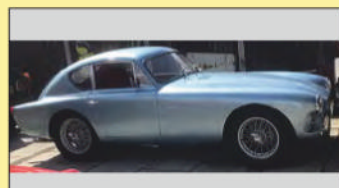
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Classified pick

Our favourite cars you can buy this month

**CORD 812 WESTCHESTER SEDAN****Year of manufacture** 1937 **Recorded mileage** 63,594km**Asking price** €119,000 **Vendor** Eberhard Thiesen, Hamburg, Germany;
0049 40 99 99 86 800; eberhard-thiesen.de**WHEN IT WAS NEW****Price** \$2545 **Max power** 125bhp **Max torque** 223lb ft
0-60mph 20.1 secs **Top speed** 98mph **Mpg** 15

It's likely that the response generated by the brand-new Cord 810 at New York's 1935 motor show would be repeated wherever the next owner of this 812 takes it – which, 90 years on, is a remarkable feat. Now, as then, it looks futuristic and otherworldly, its impact likely magnified because they are so seldom seen. The 812 was simply an 810 rebadged for the 1937 model year, Cord taking 150 leftover 1936 810s and renumbering them. But it wasn't enough to save the luxury marque, which folded that same year.

The 812 is a poignant model, then, and in the Westchester Sedan we have here, currently on the books at Eberhard Thiesen in Hamburg, a notable example. Built in Auburn, Indiana, by 7 June 1961 it was on the other side of the Atlantic, specifically France, because on that day a Monsieur Lepage sold this car for Ffr3000 to the Schlumpf brothers. According to the Musée National de l'Automobile in Mulhouse that today houses the Schlumpf Collection, Fritz Schlumpf began collecting in secret from 1960-'63, putting this car's acquisition in the middle of that period. For more than 45 years, this Cord sat as part of the reserve collection and, it is understood, was barely touched. It was only after its sale in 2008 that it received some care, with a restoration to original condition in the Czech Republic. Since 2022 it has been in another collection, this time in Germany, and it is now for sale.

Its Cadet Grey paintjob looks quite a modern shade, but is thought to be this Cord's original colour. Likewise, it's understood that the dark-blue velvet upholstery, a striking and attractive contrast to the grey that really sets off the chrome and the dazzling, engine-turned dash, replicates what was there from new. Perhaps surprisingly, that piped trim extends to the headlining.

Today, as in the 1930s, its doors hinged from the central pillar make a bold statement. The split front and rear 'screens are no less unusual: visions of the future then; distinctive talking points almost a century later. Note also the steering wheel's horn ring, an industry first when introduced on the 810, and the manually retractable headlights, operated via under-dash winders. And under that long bonnet is a 4729cc Lycoming V8, here in non-supercharged form, which works with a steering-column-mounted, semi-automatic four-speed gearbox. It's an ambitious-sounding spec, and, with today's price-tag of around £100,000, it's sadly the preserve of the fortunate few.

**SUMMARY****CHOSEN BY** Lizzie Pope**FOR** Glamorous, technically interesting and rarely seen**AGAINST** Left-hand drive; preselector gearbox might be intimidating for some**WHY SHOULD I BUY IT?**

For a taste of innovative, space-age design, 1930s style

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**1984 Ferrari 400i
Automatic Series II.1984****NEC Birmingham 1984 Show Car**

Finished in striking metallic silver grey with red hide leather and carpets, this elegant Ferrari 400i is a rare Series II example, benefitting from key factory updates including gas-filled self-levelling suspension, reprofiled camshafts (producing an additional 5 bhp), and a refined "soft" leather interior with touch-sensitive switchgear. Factory air conditioning, power assisted steering and presented in superb, original condition, this car was shown at the 1984 NEC Birmingham Motor Show—the same event that unveiled the legendary 288 GTO and Testarossa. Just one of 70 surviving examples, and one of only six in this colour. Only four owners from new, the last for 34 years. Just 43,000 miles. Supplied with its original factory service book, handbooks, leather wallet, and tools.

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Unique Specification**

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1965 Bizzarrini 5300 GT America

Chassis #BA4-0102 was delivered to the USA in "America" spec with IRS and fibreglass body. It returned to Europe in 1991 and was fully restored in Italy. Since 2007, it raced in Patrick Peter's GT Trophy, Le Mans Classic, and twice finished Spa 6 Hours. Maintained to top standards, it's ready for the 2021 season. Engine and gearbox were fully rebuilt, with only 1 hour of use in 2020. A freshly rebuilt spare engine is available separately. Eligible for GT Trophy, Sixties Endurance, Le Mans Classic, and Spa 6 Hours. **POA**



1962 Jaguar D-Type (Proteus)

A wonderful and near perfect replica built by Proteus

After Le Mans wins in 1951 and 1953 with the C-Type, Jaguar entered the 1954 race with the futuristic D-Type, featuring a self-supporting, aerodynamic body and a 3.4 L engine with 260 hp. It won Le Mans three times in a row (1955–1957); 71 units were built. This car (#P774323BW) is a high-quality D-Type replica by Proteus with aluminium body and 3.8 L E-Type engine. Bought in 1990, it went to the current Swiss collector in 2008. Regularly serviced and last veteran-inspected in 2024, it has been driven very little since. **CHF 195'000**

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WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £5686 Max power 235bhp Max torque 254lb ft
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Maserati spent most of the 1960s teetering on the edge of financial disaster, so, despite the Mistral being a real success story for the company, these are still very rare cars. Just 953 were made, and this must be one of the most excellent examples of the remaining survivors.

This Mistral, a 3.7 coupé, was delivered new to Maserati's adopted hometown of Modena in 1966 - although it had already been on a trip to get to that point. Mistral production was convoluted: the chassis first went to Maggiora, near Turin, for its bodywork, then back to Modena for Officine Padena to trim the cabin, before going across town for Maserati to finish the car. To explain the company's lack of profitability, look no further.

The final model in the lineage of six-cylinder Maseratis, Mistrals are more driveable and less complex than a V12 Ferrari, while offering more finesse than an Aston Martin. They make for superb sporting GTs: the large glasshouse gives excellent vision, and the boot is gigantic for a model of this size.

Ordered in Bianco Polo Park with a red leather interior and a manual transmission, a spec it retains today, this Mistral has spent its past four years with a fanatical Swiss Maserati and Osca specialist who has restored the car himself. Chasing factory-specification perfection, the car has been fully revived down to every last nut and bolt. The engine and transmission were overhauled, while the body was refurbished and repainted. The leather interior had survived in good enough condition that it remains original, although it was sent to an upholstery specialist for renovation.

A look in this car's engine bay confirms that it has barely been driven since its rebuild. Every surface is clean, every part appears brand-new. That might mean there will be some early breakdown jobs to address, but in terms of condition, this looks like one of the best Mistrals in the world.

I don't fully understand the person that pours their time and money into a restoration to then sell it almost as soon as it is finished. Presumably they prefer working on the car to driving it, which must be the case here because the owner reports that he has other projects on the go. They are often the best buys, however. Very rarely does a classic that has received a restoration of this magnitude achieve a price that fully compensates what has gone into it. Even when it does, you get the privilege of a freshly restored car without the wait.

SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Charlie Calderwood

FOR Rare; exceptional condition; compelling drive

AGAINST It won't be cheap, even amongst Mistrals

WHY SHOULD I BUY IT?

For a gorgeous, sporty Italian GT that is in box-fresh condition, without the hassle of restoring it yourself



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Jaguar E Type 3.8 series 1 1963 LHD, roadster, finished in gleaming carmen red with as new black hide interior with the bright aluminium dash and centre console, CD stereo system, Brand new sparkling chrome wire wheels and tyres, spare wheel unused, complete with all tools and hood cover, the whole car looks new. This breath taking icon has been totally restored from front to back by a very well known man in the Jaguar world. And has only covered a few hundred miles since. Comes complete with handbook also the amazing history file of the restoration. A chance to own probably the finest of E Types and a superb investment.....**£157,500**



Jaguar E type 4.2 Series 11 Roadster 1970, Finished in Primrose Yellow with Black Hide interior, headrests, stereo system, manual transmission, sparkling chrome wire wheels, zero miles since nut and bolt restoration, lots of bills magnificent throughout.....**£135,750**



Jaguar E Type 1969 2-2, left drive, finished in the original mirror finish of gleaming unmarked masonry black, with light beige hide interior, headrests, reclining seats, air conditioning, sparkling chrome wire wheels, manual transmission, Jaguar fitted triple Webber dco 40 carburetors, with six branch manifold, lots of history, handbook, only 500 miles since the best restoration we have ever seen, complete with all tools, recent concours winner, and winner of many shows, trophies to go with car, this is a very rare and special E Type. The original colour scheme is breath taking, also comes with everything itemized from the previous owner. This is the best 2-2 we have ever seen, more detailed pictures on our website.....**£125,750**



Jaguar E Type 1972 V12 Roadster, finished in unmarked opalescent silver blue, with cherry red hide interior, headrests, navy blue soft top, over mats, stereo system, sparkling chrome wire wheels, with white side tyres, tinted glass, manual transmission, power steering, complete with all tools, this car has only 25,000 original miles from new, and only two owners, and has the original British Leyland service book, and handbook, with excellent history, drives like a new car, and in totally superb condition, just stunning.....**£145,500**



Jaguar E Type V12 Roadster 1973/4 Finished in Signal Red with black hide interior, manual transmission, As new chrome wire wheels with new white side tyres, complete with original Tools and handbook, Displayed in a museum for many years, Only 37,000 miles**£135,500**



Jaguar SS100 sports coach built by the famous Adams coach builders who were responsible for most of the exotic sports cars being a sister design man. This roadster was built in 1965 based on the 1955 Jaguar SS100, one of only 17 built, finished in British racing green with beige hide interior, headrests, radio, CD player powered by the popular Jaguar 4.2 engine with triple carb manual gearbox with overdrive, power steering and disc brakes, making this a pleasure to drive. It has four wind-up windows, all weather equipment, plus side screens, fitted with factory wire wheels and twin side mounts with fitted mirrors, comes equipped with hood cover, full bonnet cover, rear chrome luggage rack, badge bar with various badges, wire grill, headlight protectors, twin spots, excellent history file with invoices and old MOTs, and tax discs, complete with all tools, and very expensive in door car cover, this car is just stunning and a fine investment.....**£85,750**



Rolls Royce Phantom 11 Sedan de ville 1934, coach built by the famous Windover, this limousine is finished in masons black over yellow, with brown hide to the chauffeurs compartment, and west of England cloth to rear. Occasional seats to rear with glass division, superb highly polished veneers, vanity mirrors, sheepskin over rugs front and rear, touring trunk to rear, twin side mounts, opera lights, Strilux marshal 12 inch headlamps, opening windscreen.....**£275,500**



Jaguar SS100 Built in 1975 by the famous coach builders Birchfield in handcrafted aluminium based on the 1935 SS100. These cars are very rare, only 22 were ever made, this one is No 18, these cars have over tripled in price because of the investment side of them plus they drive beautifully. Powered by the Jaguar 4.2 engine with twin carbs. Hardly ever see these for sale because of the rarity of them. Although we have been fortunate to have owned seven of these masterpieces. Finished in gleaming red with beige hide interior piped in red with embroidered headrests, Power steering, automatic, sparkling chrome wire wheels, Beige convertible top and spare wheel cover and hood cover, large chrome headlights with chrome mesh grills, twin spots, side pillar light, stereo, disc brakes. All weather equipment. Probably the finest coach built repro in the world, this car is just breathtaking **£145,500**. More pictures on website <http://www.peterjarvis.net>



Mercedes Sports 1985 280SL Finished in gleaming unmarked classic white, with black hide interior, rear seats, hard and soft tops, automatic, power steering, power windows, ABS brakes, alloys, stereo system, 69,000 miles, service history, complete with all tools, new Mot supplied on purchase, only three previous owners, always garaged, drives superb, excellent example**£27,750**



Mercedes sports 300SL 1988/9 finished in astral silver, with navy blue interior and matching soft top, complete with hard top, rear seats over mats, tinted glass, stereo system, abs, alloys, power windows, automatic, power steering, spare wheel never used, complete with all tools, only one previous owner, only 23,000 miles from new, with excellent service history from new, garaged from new, just magnificent throughout.....**£59,750**



Jaguar E Type V12 2-2 1971 finished in signal red with black hide interior, chrome wire wheels, stereo system, power steering, automatic, thousands spent to bring this E Type to the highest of standards, original handbook**£86,500**



Ford 1955 Zephyr Mk1 Three position convertible Finished in Dorchester Grey with a Maroon soft top and hood cover, Matching interior and carpets, Period radio, Sun visor, Pillar spotlight, Badge bar, Twin spots, white side tyres, complete with tools, handbook and invoices, restored to the highest standard, absolutely stunning, more pictures on website.....**£49,750**



Ford Zephyr convertible 1955 Mk1 Three position Drop head, finished in Dorchester Grey over Maroon, with superb interior, with matching hood and hood cover, sun visor, twin spots and badge bar, pillar spotlight, period radio, complete with tools, handbook and many invoices, featured in many magazines, very rare and a fine investment. This car is just breathtaking**£49,750** Choice of three



Rolls Royce 2025 1934 coach built by Park Ward finished in Masons Black over Maroon, rear touring trunk with all tools and compartments and picnic tables to rear, as new carpets and head lining, the veneers are highly polished. Excellent history file containing original bill of sale invoices for work carried out and letters from previous owners dating back many years. This very elegant car runs and drives silent as one would expect of this superb example.....**£57,750**



Jaguar E Type 3.8 Series 1 Roadster 1963 Finished in gleaming unmarked British Racing Green, with matching soft top. With as new tan interior and tonneau cover, Period radio, Like new chrome wire wheels and tyres. This car is just breath-taking. Probably one of the best we have ever seen. If you want the very best here it is.**£165,500 GBP**



Ford Zephyr 1954 MK 1 finished in masons black, with superb original maroon interior, manual transmission, steel sun visor, twin spots, side hunting lamp, new slim band tyres badge bar and badges, original working radio, good history, only 48,000 miles from new, many old M-O-Ts, original handbook, complete with all tools, and jack, known to us from new, entered in many shows, this remarkable original car runs superb, probable only a few available excellent investment.....**£26,750**



Daimler Sovereign 420 1967 finished in golden sand with cherry red hide interior, automatic, power steering, badge bar, chrome wire wheels, stereo. These Daimlers are very rare and probably never in the condition of this car, being kept in remarkable condition from new, and only 53,000 miles with a folder full of history and old MOTs, complete with original tool kit, having only three owners from new the last owned 34 years, a superb classic that drives excellent and can be driven every day, garaged from new. Excellent value for this appreciating classic.....**£36,750**

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2000 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Auto. Aston Martin racing green with green and fawn leather, alloys, sport's exhaust usual high spec etc, two owners and 38000 miles only, with full AM service history, beautiful original mint example one of the finest available. **£29,950**



1988 Ferrari 328 GTS LHD example in Rosso Corsa with Tan leather. 19000 miles only with full documentation. All books tools etc, Recent full service and tyres, ultimate registration number E328 GTS (will separate) possibly the finest. Available in concours show condition. **£99,950.**



2017 Porsche 991.2 Turbo Viper Green with full black leather trim. Massive factory specification (on request). One owner, 6000 miles Only with FPPSH. As new, and unmarked ...**£109,950.**



1977 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow 2. Walnut with London tan leather, Wilton Carpets and Lambs wool over Rugs, 61000 miles Only, Full documented history from Day one, huge history file, all original MOTs and invoices, Original Book pack and factory warranty. 3 previous owners from new. Without Question one of the finest in existence. **Magnificent in every way. £29,950**



2005 Bentley Arnage T Mulliner. Sapphire Blue with cream leather, blue dash Blue carpets and Lambswool over rugs. Sunroof, plus massive factory spec (on request). 55000 miles with FBSH. Stunning original showroom example **£29995.**



1959 Austin Healey Sprite MK1. Iris blue with blue trim and black hood. Original RHD Uk example with Heritage certificate. Lovely rust free example with huge Documented History, original front bumper stunning **£19950.**



1954 Bentley RType auto. Two tone grey with red leather trim and burr walnut, excellent body, Chassis and Engine, 61000 miles and three owners. Factory Sunroof. Stunning example that drives beautifully. **£29,950.**



1963 Mini Minor Finished in period Yellow with blue trim. Original Uk matching numbers car in lovely. Original condition and driving superbly. Vast history file and documentation going back 50 years, stunning **£16,950.**



1995 Range Rover 4.2LSE LWB. Classic (soft dash) in Stunning Niagara Grey with Grey leather and Cyclone alloy wheels. Ex-factory car with Brooklands Bodykit and magnificent rust-free condition. Restored to Show winning standards a few years ago at great expense. Rust-free, Excellent Paint, Wood, Leather, Headliner, Wheels etc. 129K with Fully documented history. **£36,950**



1974 BMW 3.0CS auto. Fjord Blue with blue velour trim. Alpina alloys, 82000 miles. An original RHD Matching numbers example. That was fully restored to a very high standard. Several years ago for a private collection. Lovely example that drives beautifully. **£54,950.**



1995 Jaguar XJR Supercharged Auto. Rosé Bronze with Charcoal leather. Completely rust free and original, low mileage Mint example, The Best we have seen since they were new! **£22,950.**



2005 Bentley Continental GT. Finished in dark emerald with beige and green leather, stunning original example, two previous owners, 80000 miles with FSH (Bentley & VW main agent from new) All books, tools, documentation MOTs etc. **This beautiful example is not to be confused with the normal Tatt/Auction fodder... £21,950**



1963 Bentley Continental S3 Flying Spur By H J Mulliner, silver grey with burgundy Leather and Burr Walnut, magnificent example restored to show standard by leading specialist, huge history file and drives superbly. **£210,950.**

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'The Jaguar has been developed by a band of enthusiasts controlled by a managing director devoted exclusively to the production of an ideal,' enthused *The Motor* in its June 1939 road test of the new SS Jaguar 2½-litre. This was more than one of the best-looking saloon cars of its time. A twin-carburettor, 2664cc straight-six fettled by Henry Weslake provided the performance to match its low-slung, rakish profile, and there was just as much space inside as in the more upright – and no faster – Derby Bentley. At a third of the price of the establishment choice, Coventry had a runaway success on its hands. More than 6000 2½-litres were produced, joining 10,980 1½- and 3162 3½-litre siblings.

Few survived the early post-war years, but this car has had the benefit of preserving custodians at crucial moments. Its first owner was Mr JF Hardie, a fruit importer who took delivery in January 1939, via Henlys of Manchester. As later recalled by his nephew, Hardie drove unusually carefully during his 20 years with the car. Then, in 1964, it was rescued from the scrapyard by two locals who gave it another lease of life, and in 1993 it found the most recent of its committed keepers.

"Peter really wants it to go to an enthusiast who will continue to use it as he has, and now no longer can due to illness," says Keith Cornwell of A1 Classic Cars. "It is a very rare car and, although not in concours condition, it is wonderfully turned out and in excellent mechanical shape. It's in the sort of mature condition that you'd have likely found it in when it was 10 years old."

As well as having traced much of its history, including speaking to Hardie's nephew, Peter spent countless hours turning what had arrived with him as a largely dismantled 2½-litre into one of the best-running on the road. Early on, he restored the steering system with new bushes and kingpins, as well as the gearbox synchromesh and the rear-axle internals. Anything that proved unavailable he remade himself, including the brass boot lock, wooden rear armrests and leather door-card trim. By 2010, Peter had completed more than 20,000 miles in his beloved SS Jaguar, and then treated it to an engine rebuild with steel conrods replacing the more fragile Duralumin items.

Few machines come along that are more worthy of a good owner – and a good drive – than this delightful saloon.



SUMMARY

CHOSEN BY Aaron McKay
FOR Excellent running order; early Jaguar style; history
AGAINST Imperfect bodywork; colour is not original
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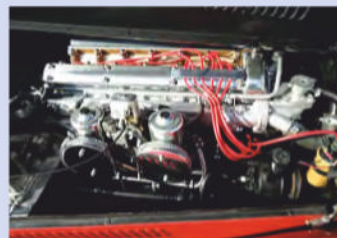
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Jaguar SS100 Built in 1975 by the famous coach builders Birchfield in handcrafted aluminum based on the 1935 SS100. These cars are very rare, only 22 were ever made, this one is No 18, these cars have over tripled in price because of the investment side of them plus they drive beautifully. Powered by the Jaguar 4.2 engine with twin carbs. Hardly ever see these for sale because of the rarity of them. Although we have been fortunate to have owned seven of these masterpieces. Finished in gleaming red with beige hide interior piped in red with embroidered headrests, Power steering, automatic, sparkling chrome wire wheels, Beige convertible top and spare wheel cover and hood cover, large chrome headlights with chrome mesh grills, twin spots, side pillar light, stereo, disc brakes. All weather equipment. Probably the finest coach built repro in the world, this car is just breathtaking **£145,500.**
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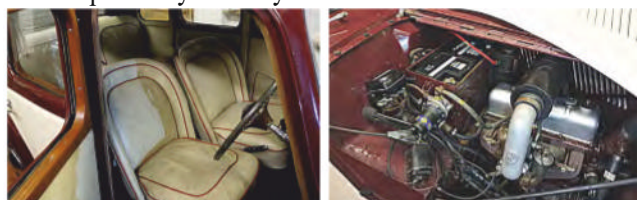


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How long have you been in business?

Since 2008. I'm Coventry born, my family were all Coventry motor industry, and I raced and rallied 1950s-'60s Jaguars and Triumphs, so they are my specialism.

What's the most and least you ever sold a car for?

The most was £750k, the least an Audi Coupé I gave for free to a student enthusiast, who cherished it and still does. Unless we encourage young people into old cars, there is a dim future.

What was the one that got away?

A C-type Jaguar in 2008. For exactly that reason, I used my banking experience to set up a collector-car bank in 2017.

What would you never part with?

My TR3A, 6 VFM. I've done multiple rallies with my wife and father in it; it's scruffy, special and not for sale, ever.

What's the best classic you've owned?

I've sold PBH 995, my Jaguar XK120, three times since 2008. Having restored dozens of XKs, this car just does everything better than any I've ever had. It's for sale again, but if it stays with me then I'm happy.

What's your daily driver?

A 1985 BMW E28. My first boss had one, and so do I. I adore it, and seemingly so does everyone else because it's always admired.

How's business? Good, actually. There's a change in the buying demographic, but there will come a time very soon when a £75k Sierra buyer will realise a £75k E-type is great value, and the scales of classic cars and retro machines will balance.

What does the future hold? Embrace the younger generation, help them grow into older cars and all will be well. Take a 'them and us' approach and classics will wither back to where they were 30 years ago.

What should readers buy now? Buy what you like. If you buy as an investment in this market, there is always somebody smarter than you, so buy what you like and if it goes up in value, good for you. At least you are driving your dream.

MEET & GREET

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Aston Martin DB2/4 MKII, 1956. RHD. EEC registration.



1953 Jaguar XK120 Barou Competition Roadster.

Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint Rally, 1963.
Alpine A106 MM, 1955. Period MM car.
BMW Z8 convertible, 2001.
Fiat 508CS Balilla Aerodinamica, 1935.
Ferrari 512 BBi, 1983. Certified.

Itala Tipo 61 Roadster, 1929. MM eligible.
Jaguar C-Type replica, 1953.
Lamborghini Huracan Sterrato, 2024.
Maserati Mistral 3.7 Frua Coupe, 1966.
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1995 PORSCHE 911 (993) CARRERA 4 COUPE (LHD) This Highly Collectable Porsche 911 (993) Carrera 4 6 Speed Manual Was Supplied By Sonnen Porsche Of San Francisco Blvd. Original Invoice Is Within The File. Finished In Private Silver Metallic With Classic Grey Leather Seats. Having Benefited From California's Dry Climate The Body And Paintwork Are In Immaculate Condition As Is The Interior Commensurate With The Low Mileage Of Only 58,895 Miles. Benefits From Air Conditioning, Cd Player, Sunroof, Electric Adjustable Seats Etc. Fitted With A Cat 5 Tracker. June 21 At 57,775 Miles The Porsche Had A Full Recondition At Renowned Porsche Specialist Garbrest. Full Details Are Within The File Along With The Invoice For £2,921. Comes With A Service Book, Owners Manual Etc. This Iconic Example Of Porsche's Final Version Of The Air Cooled Engine Is Widely Regarded As The Best Generation Of The 911 Ever Produced. **£84,995**



ULEZ EXEMPT

1969 LOTUS ELAN S4 "ONLY 27,700 MILES" This rare Elan is one of a limited number of Lotus cars badged black. The cars had black badges and a steering wheel bearing Colin Chapman's signature. An incredible one owner car which has covered only 27,000 miles after being on the road until 1991. Now fully restored including engine rebuild, new clutch, bare shell repainted in its original French Blue, refurbished wheels, new tyres, suspension stripped and rebuilt, new shock absorbers etc. The interior is totally original. Comes with original handbooks, service book, MOTs up to 1991 and one carried out October 24. Unique opportunity to acquire a genuine one owner low mileage Elan. **£49,995**



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1989 MERCEDES 230CE COUPE AUTO "Only 55,000 miles" Finished in Mercedes Blue/Black with cream leather interior. Very high specification facelift model which includes an electric tilt and sliding sunroof, electric front and rear windows, iconic 15 hole flat faced alloy wheels, retractable rear headrests, leather trimmed steering wheel and radio/CD player. Only 55,000 miles from new with an impressive 22 service stamps in the service book and only 3 owners from new. Comes with the owners manual and stamped service book. Very hard to find a low mileage and low ownership example. **£14,995**



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ULEZ EXEMPT

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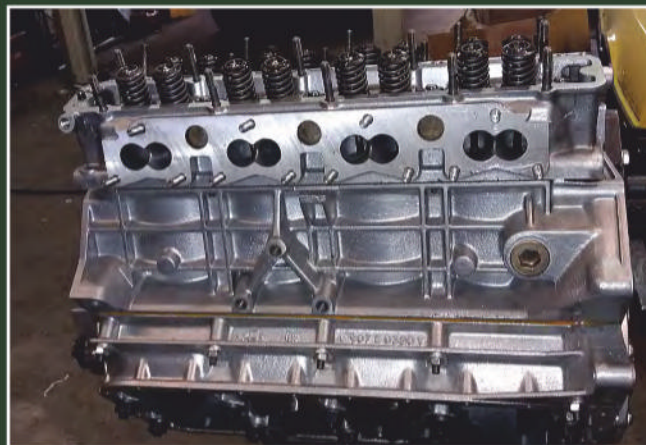
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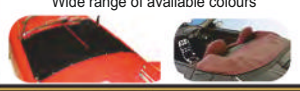
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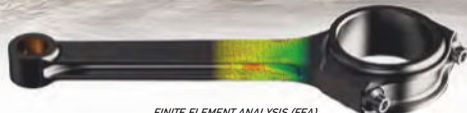


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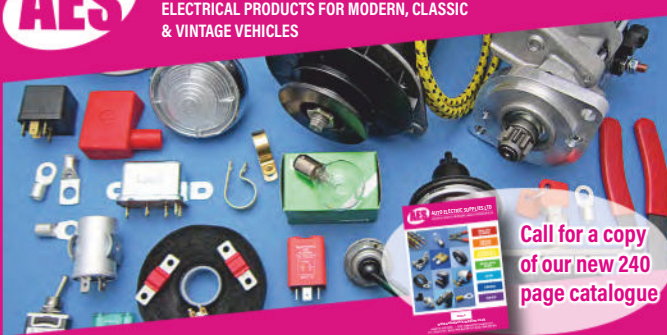


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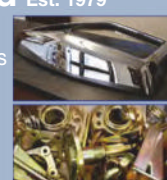
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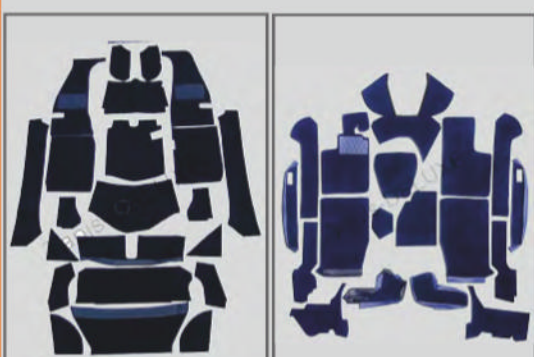
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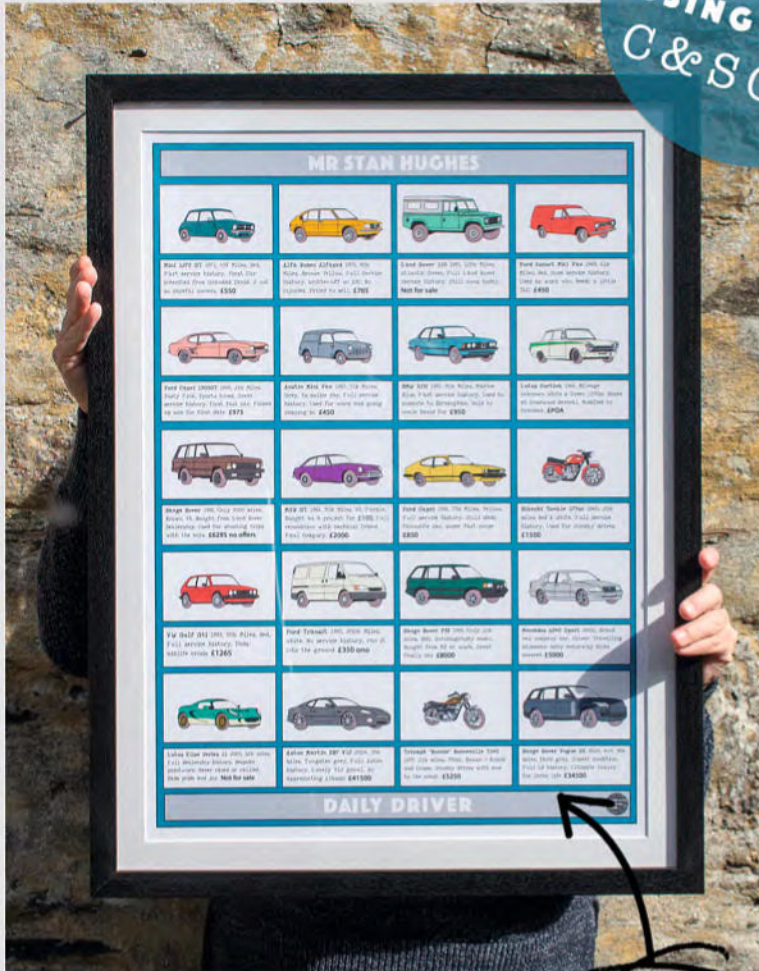


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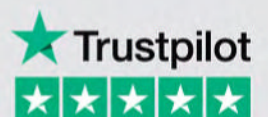
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FACTFILE

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The limited-run CSR hits a sweet spot of dynamic performance and compliance

WORDS **SIMON HUCKNALL** PHOTOGRAPHY **JACK HARRISON**

Is there a new Caterham that doesn't deserve *Future classic* status? Probably not: most are instant classics anyway. But if rarity plays a part, along with a unique engineering twist, then the CSR Twenty is perhaps more deserving than any other.

After the original CSR was launched in 2005, British buyers were nonplussed by the model to the extent that Caterham eventually withdrew it from UK sale. That was a shame, because it represented the biggest technological change in the Seven's 32-year history, with the adoption of all-round independent suspension by wishbones. It was a more salubrious car, too (relatively), being 180mm longer and 230mm wider than the regular model, if maybe at the expense of some snake-hipped charm. If that, and a lack of the original Seven's more hardcore, semi-independent rear, put off customers 20 years ago, then Caterham now thinks there are enough British buyers to tempt with the final 20 (hence the name) CSRs off the line.

A kit-build option is off-menu, which goes a tiny way to explaining the Twenty's slightly eye-watering £79,995 price. Powered in this final guise by Ford's Duratec 2-litre 'four', the CSR makes 210bhp at 7600rpm and 150lb ft at 6300rpm. Drive is delivered to the Toyo Proxes-shod rear wheels via a Mazda MX-5 five-speed and an open diff (a limited-slip diff is optional).

FUTURE CLASSIC



Inside, there's a simple, carbonfibre-faced dash, neat controls, and a leather-trimmed gear tunnel inlaid with Alcantara around the handbrake and gearlever. The leather seats are (for a Caterham) sumptuous – although, at 5ft 7in, I needed the driver's chair adjusted fully forward to reach the pedals – I'm near enough the minimum height for CSR ownership.

If track days are your thing, there are faster and cheaper Sevens available. But for road use, the CSR's dynamic repertoire takes some beating. With that 210bhp shifting just 620kg, performance is optimum – but not too ballistic – for enjoyable A- and B-road hustles. There's a surprisingly rich seam of torque from low revs, but, thanks to the throttle's long travel, it takes a few miles to fully appreciate how strong the engine is in its upper reaches as you keep it on the boil via the ultra-short-shifting 'box.

Thanks to that signature, more grown-up suspension, there's extra compliance and better control at speed, particularly over rough surfaces. You can see the carbonfibre front mudguards being given a workout while the car remains more stable than any other Seven you'll have driven. The by-product of this is, perhaps, a surfeit of grip over power, with some of the Seven's traditional playfulness lost. But that's a small price to pay for one of the rarest and most capable Caterhams yet.



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